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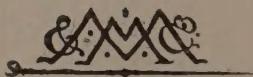
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BELIEF AND CREED

BEING AN EXAMINATION OF PORTIONS OF
"THE FAITH OF A MODERN CHURCHMAN"
DEALING WITH THE APOSTLES' CREED

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BY

FREDERIC HENRY CHASE

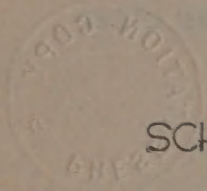
D.D., HON. D.D. (OXON.)

BISHOP OF ELY

SOMETIME NORRISIAN PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY CAMBRIDGE

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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1918



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PREFACE

VERY few preliminary words are needed in the case of this little book. In the first chapter I have fully explained the circumstances which made me feel that it was my plain duty to endeavour to write it. It has grown under my hand ; and partly for this reason, partly also because my time is not my own, I have not been able to finish it so soon as I at first hoped to do.

I have not read any one of the reviews of *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, nor have I allowed any one to report to me their contents. I wished to form a perfectly independent opinion of the book.

In several passages I have adopted the language which I used in the Essay on " The Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism " which I contributed to the volume of *Cambridge Theological Essays* in 1905, in the Preface to that Essay as

reprinted in 1914, and in a paper on the Ascension, which appeared in the volume *The Meaning of the Creed* (published by S.P.C.K.), and which was written in 1916.

I am deeply indebted to two friends who have read the proof-sheets of this volume and who have greatly helped me by several valuable suggestions.

ELY,
St. Luke's Day, 1918.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION. EPISCOPAL RESOLUTIONS AT THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE AND IN THE CON- VOCATION OF CANTERBURY	I

CHAPTER II

THE CLAUSES OF THE APOSTLES' CREED	37
--	----

CHAPTER III

THE VIRGIN BIRTH	55
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV

THE RESURRECTION ON THE THIRD DAY	81
---	----

CHAPTER V

"SYMBOLICAL INTERPRETATION"	159
---------------------------------------	-----

ADDITIONAL NOTES

	PAGE
I. THE ASCENSION	185
II. THE READING IN JOHN I. 13 AND THE MEAN- ING OF THE WORD "ONLY-BEGOTTEN" .	199
INDEX	207

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION. EPISCOPAL RESOLUTIONS AT THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE AND IN THE CONVOCATION OF CANTERBURY

THE object of the following pages is to fulfil a pledge which I gave a few months ago. I promised that, as I felt it my duty publicly to challenge a certain claim which Canon Glazebrook put forward in his book entitled *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* in regard to the interpretation of two clauses of the Apostles' Creed, so I would publicly challenge the arguments by which he there endeavoured to justify his position.

Nothing but the clearest and most imperative sense of duty would have induced me to undertake this task. It is utterly painful to me to criticise the work of a near neighbour to whom I owe a debt for many acts of kindness and of help. It is utterly painful to me to engage in a controversy connected with subjects so sacred as the Birth, the Death, the Resurrection, and the

Ascension of our Lord. And the distastefulness of the work to which I must set my hand is greatly increased by the circumstances of the time. We are all bearing the burden of unprecedented public and private anxieties. We are all under an obligation, not least one who holds the office of Bishop, to consider the many grave practical questions—social, moral, religious, ecclesiastical—which have been brought into prominence by the War. But when a man in his conscience believes that to do a certain thing is his duty, he has no choice. His course is marked out for him.

The book, a certain portion of which I have to consider, is strictly a representative book. Its title is *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*. It is the first of a series of volumes called "The Modern Churchman's Library." The writer selected is, I believe, the Chairman of the Council of the Churchmen's Union, and is one who for many years has given much time to Biblical studies, and who is known by his work in this field. Canon Glazebrook himself in the Preface (p. viii) uses the following words: "Conscious that he cannot divest himself of a representative character, the author has written with a strong sense of duty to the members of the Churchmen's Union."

Further, it is right that I should lay stress upon the fact that in what follows I am not

criticising the personal religious belief of an individual. The Canon (p. 78) states an actual fact that "the claim is being made in the case of two" clauses of the Apostles' Creed—"Born of the Virgin Mary," and "The third day He rose again from the dead"—that they "may be or ought to be interpreted symbolically." But, so far as I have observed, he nowhere explicitly tells us that he wishes to associate himself with that claim. If a critic were to allege that Canon Glazebrook had denied any article of the Apostles' Creed in its plain meaning, he might be met with a challenge to quote words from the book which established this assertion; and to the best of my belief he would not be able to produce the proof demanded.

I have undertaken to challenge Canon Glazebrook's arguments. Incidentally, from time to time on important matters I shall do my best to be positive and constructive. I shall also endeavour, so far as I can analyse my own inmost thoughts, to express exactly my own position, not because I suppose that my personal beliefs are of general interest, but because I wish to speak without reserve. But in the main the work which lies before me is critical. And criticism in its essential nature is a somewhat wearisome process. It is negative in character.

It must needs enter into matters of detail. Frequently an assertion is made in a single sentence which it takes many pages at all adequately to examine. I must justify my criticisms and my statements, not only to those who have read the briefly worded assertions, but to those who have made them. Moreover, it is essential that both the critic and also the critic's readers should have clearly before their minds the statements and the reasonings which are under review. I have decided therefore that my wisest and best course is to print in full (1) those paragraphs of Canon Glazebrook's book *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* which are the primary subject of investigation, and (2) my two letters which appeared in the *Times* on May 13, 22, 1918, respectively, and Canon Glazebrook's letter which appeared on May 21. My first letter was originally published in the May number of the *Ely Diocesan Gazette*, which on the cover is described as "The Official Organ of the Lord Bishop."

1. *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, pp. 77 ff.

So the words of the two creeds remain unchanged to this day. Yet their meaning is not unchanged; for forms of words, like material forms, wear different aspects when approached from different sides. For instance, some clauses in the Apostles' Creed, which

were unquestionably believed by the early Church to be literal statements of fact, are now regarded by Churchmen of all schools as purely symbolical; because modern knowledge has made their literal truth inconceivable to educated men. In other words, it is generally recognised that in each of these cases a spiritual truth was presented under the form of a material image adapted to the comprehension of the age which produced it; and that whereas the truth signified remains, the material image, grown obsolete, rather obscures than exhibits it. The clauses in question are as follows:—

“ He descended into hell.

He ascended into heaven,

And sitteth at the right hand of God.

The resurrection of the flesh.” (“ Body ” is a wrong translation introduced into our services for Mattins and Evensong. The right version remains in the Baptismal Service and the Visitation of the Sick.)

Of these clauses the first two have no literal meaning except for those (if any yet remain) who regard the earth as the fixed centre of creation, with a hollow space underneath for Hades and a solid vault overhead. The third ascribes a human body to God the Father. The fourth contradicts the teaching of St. Paul (see Chapter III.).

In these four cases a change of interpretation has been generally accepted since Galileo narrowly escaped being burnt alive for saying that the earth moved round the sun. Are these the only clauses which may be or ought to be interpreted symbolically? The claim is being made in the case of two others—“ Born of the Virgin Mary,” and “ He rose again¹ from the dead.”

¹ Though the words by themselves could be interpreted otherwise, they were undoubtedly meant to express “ the resurrection of the flesh.”

2. Letter of the Bishop of Ely

THE PALACE, ELY,
April 26, 1918.

MY DEAR CANON GLAZEBROOK—I feel that it is my duty as Bishop of the Diocese formally to write to you and to tell you that I am unable to admit the “claim” which, as I understand you, you put forward in your recently published book *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* (p. 78) that the two clauses of the Apostles’ Creed—“Born of the Virgin Mary” and “The third day he rose again from the dead”—can legitimately be “interpreted symbolically.” That this position of mine, to which I have thus given expression, is not simply that of an individual Bishop is clear from the following facts. The Bishops of the whole Anglican Communion assembled at the Lambeth Conference of 1908 passed the following Resolution: “This Conference, in view of tendencies widely shown in the writings of the present day, hereby places on record its conviction that the historical facts stated in the Creeds are an essential part of the Faith of the Church.” Again, on April 30, 1914, the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury passed a Resolution in which they “solemnly reaffirmed” the Resolution of the Lambeth Conference just quoted.

I am bound also to call attention to a later paragraph in your book (p. 79), in which you use these words: “Similar questions arise about the corresponding clauses in the Nicene Creed. And there are others concerning the more elaborate Christology of that Creed, which involve more issues than can be raised in these pages.” What further “claim” may be covered by the last sentence I do not know.

When I had read your book, of which you kindly

sent to me a copy on February 18, I made up my mind that it would be my duty, however painful to me, publicly as Bishop to state my opinion about the claim which I understand you to make as to the interpretation of the clauses of the Apostles' Creed. It was very distasteful to me as a student publicly to challenge your conclusions without at the same time publicly challenging the arguments by which you endeavour to justify your conclusions, including your statements and your exegesis of passages in the New Testament. I have however found it hitherto impossible by reason of the pressure of necessary work to give proper attention to this task; and I now realise that in the immediate future I shall be unable to devote sufficient time to it. Since continued silence on my part in regard to the "claim" advanced in your book as to the interpretation of the Apostles' Creed is liable to be misunderstood by many, I have decided that my right course is without further delay to address to you this letter and to make it public in the *Diocesan Gazette*.—I am, yours very sincerely,

F. H. ELY.

The Rev. M. G. Glazebrook, D.D.,
Canon of Ely.

3. *Letter of Canon Glazebrook*

MY DEAR LORD BISHOP—I should be discourteous to you and untrue to myself if I did not openly reply to the open letter which you have addressed to me concerning my little book. In so doing I shall observe the same limits which you imposed upon yourself. There are, as you say, two roads by which you might advance to challenge my position—that of reason and that of authority; and you have chosen the way of

authority, as the simpler and more direct. It is therefore on that side only that I now come to meet you.

But first I must serve as your guide, lest you should aim at a wrong objective. For by quoting a sentence without its context you have seriously misrepresented my position ; and you would not have done so unless you had misunderstood it. The very next line to the sentence which you extract from page 78 is a footnote which indicates that it is the resurrection *of the flesh* that modern Churchmen claim may without heresy be regarded as symbolical. On the same page reference is made to Chapter III., where (pp. 27-29) belief in the resurrection of a " spiritual body " is several times emphasised, yet your letter has naturally given some readers, who were not acquainted with the book, the false impression that I have denied the reality of our Lord's Resurrection.

You quote two episcopal pronouncements, of 1908 and 1914, to which I will refer in turn. Before doing so, however, let me remind you that our Church does not regard even bishops in council as infallible. The 21st article says with respect to General Councils that " they may err, and have erred, even in things pertaining to God." But, as I wrote in my book, " Our own church is for us the body of Christ " ; and therefore the joint pronouncements of her leaders have a strong claim upon our obedience. As they cannot be obeyed until they are understood, loyalty required me to examine the meaning of the declaration which, as you say, has been twice affirmed.

I. What did the bishops of the Lambeth Conference mean by saying that " the historical facts stated in the Creeds are an essential part of the Faith of the Church " ? The natural interpretation is this : " Each clause which mentions an event as having

taken place in historical time must be accepted by the faithful as a literal statement of a fact." That was certainly the view taken by the bishops in general and by nearly all Christian people for some fifteen hundred years. And yet it may be doubted whether that is what the Lambeth Conference meant to express. For the Bishop of Oxford, who represents the opinion of many bishops, has written (*The Basis of Anglican Fellowship*, p. 20): "When I say 'He descended into hell,' and also when in a more general sense I say 'He ascended into heaven, and sitteth,' etc., I confess to the use of metaphor in a historical statement, because the historical statement carries me outside the world of present possible experience, and symbolical language is the only language that I can use." In other words, those three clauses must be interpreted symbolically. As to one of them, Bishop Westcott wrote long ago (*Revelation of the Risen Lord*, p. 180): "The physical elevation was a speaking parable, an eloquent symbol, but not the truth to which it pointed or the reality which it foreshadowed. The change which Christ revealed by the Ascension was not a change of place, but a change of state, not local but spiritual. Still, from the necessities of our human condition the spiritual change was represented sacramentally, so to speak, in an outward form." The Bishop of Oxford has expressed the same idea in language even more involved. If I may translate their meaning into plain English, it is this: "Our Lord could not, for astronomical reasons of which the disciples were ignorant, physically ascend into heaven. But, in order to give them a right conception of His change of state, He rose to a moderate height in the air, and then so veiled Himself behind a cloud that they believed Him to have gone right up to the vault of the sky." You have yourself quoted and endorsed

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Bishop Westcott's words (*The Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism*, p. xxxi), and elaborated his theory in a tract written for the National Mission (*The Ascension of the Lord Jesus*, pp. 14, 15). Whether the theory be sound or not, by presenting it you have joined with its author in claiming that one of "the historical facts stated in the creeds" must be interpreted symbolically. You could not, indeed, do otherwise: for since the days of Copernicus no literal interpretation has been possible to men who realise what is involved in rejecting the old geocentric astronomy.

Since three clauses of the Apostles' Creed are by many bishops explained to be symbols of spiritual truth, not statements of historical fact, I am forbidden to understand the Lambeth declaration in its natural sense. How, then, is it to be understood? Only one way seems open. We must take "the historical facts" to mean such of the statements as appear, in the light of our present knowledge, to be historical: and regard the other statements as symbolical. The declaration, thus qualified, is one to which we can all subscribe. But it proves to be a rule of lead, which is not of much use for bringing us into line. For the question immediately arises, Are there only three clauses which may be interpreted symbolically? The bishops as a body have given no answer. But the Bishop of Oxford has proposed a test by which the symbolical may be distinguished from the historical. The symbolical, he says, is all that "carries me outside the world of present possible experience." If this test were accepted, the claim to interpret the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of the flesh symbolically would be undeniable. But neither this test nor any other has been accepted by the bishops in council, nor have they enumerated the clauses which must be taken in the

literal sense. Since they have left it doubtful how far their principle of symbolical interpretation may be carried, their followers have in some measure to judge for themselves.

II. The Upper House of Convocation in April, 1914, reaffirmed the Lambeth pronouncement. Their action cannot be understood without recalling the circumstances. The Bishop of Southwark had presented a memorial which was signed not only by its authors, the Council of the Churchmen's Union, but also by some forty clergymen of undoubted eminence—retired bishops, deans, professors, headmasters, and other scholars. It contained the following paragraph:—

“While asserting without reserve our belief in the Incarnation and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we submit that a wide liberty of belief should be allowed with regard to the mode and attendant circumstances of both.” The bishops, in reply, after reaffirming the Lambeth declaration, concluded with these words: “At the same time, recognising that our generation is called to face new problems raised by historical criticism, we are anxious not to lay unnecessary burdens upon conscience, nor unduly to limit freedom of thought and enquiry, whether among clergy or among laity. We desire, therefore, to lay stress on the need of considerateness in dealing with that which is tentative and provisional in the thought and work of earnest and reverent students.”

I need not presume to estimate the relaxation which is implied in those two sentences, for the Archbishop of Canterbury did so in concluding the debate. These are his words: “I do not wish to be dogmatic about it, but I do not myself see anything in the actual wording of what is obviously the weightiest of the memorials that were presented to us, that to which

the Bishop of Southwark yesterday called attention, which is necessarily inconsistent with what we are now declaring. Put the two documents, the Petition and the Resolution, side by side, dismissing all thought of the men who are supporting either of them, and I confess that I find nothing in the two that is radically or essentially inconsistent. They ask for reasonable liberty, and we propose that they shall have that liberty; but there are limits to that liberty, and we have tried in some measure to define it."

Considering the ambiguous character of the Lambeth declaration, the definite claim made in the memorial, the qualified answer of Convocation, and the reconciling comment of the Primate, I think it cannot fairly be urged that I have defied episcopal authority in writing the words to which you draw attention, and the two chapters (III. and VII.) upon which they depend for their meaning.—I remain, yours very sincerely,

M. G. GLAZEBROOK.

May 17, 1918.

4. *Letter of the Bishop of Ely*

To the Editor of the "Times."

SIR—In reference to Canon Glazebrook's letter to me, which appears in the *Times* to-day, I ask you generously to allow me space to say that I hope, so soon as in these exacting days is possible, to fulfil the promise clearly implied in my original letter to the Canon (which appeared in the *Times* of May 13), and publicly to challenge the arguments by which in his book, *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, he endeavours to justify his conclusions. At the present time, there-

fore, I refrain from making any comment on his letter to me which you print to-day.—Yours faithfully,

F. H. ELY.

THE PALACE, ELY, *May 21.*

Before I turn to *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* it is clearly necessary that, as briefly as possible, I should deal with the Canon's letter to me.

Canon Glazebrook in the opening portion of his letter raises two personal questions. He says that I "have chosen the way of authority, as the simpler and more direct." He also, in regard to the article of the Apostles' Creed on the Lord's Resurrection, uses the following words: "By quoting a sentence without its context you have seriously misrepresented my position." To the second of these two statements I shall necessarily have to refer when I am reviewing the Canon's position in reference to our Lord's Resurrection. But as I have no intention of allowing myself to be drawn aside into a bypath of personal controversy, I refrain here from saying anything further. With great contentment I leave these personal questions to the judgment of those who read with care the relevant portions of the book and of the correspondence. Further, in his letter the Canon refers to the clause of the Apostles' Creed touching the Ascension. With this question

I shall deal at the proper place in my examination of the book. The only subject therefore in the Canon's letter to which I must now advert is the Resolution of the Bishops of the Anglican Communion in 1908, and the Resolution of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury passed on April 30, 1914.

I print below in full the Resolution of Convocation last mentioned. It will be observed that it embodies the whole of the Resolution of the Lambeth Conference. The latter is the second of the "Resolutions formally adopted by the Conference of 1908." It will be found on p. 47 of the official record of that Conference published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Canon Glazebrook questions the scope of the Resolution of the Bishops at the Lambeth Conference and of the Resolution of the Bishops in Convocation. When the Bishops speak of "the historical facts stated in the Creeds," do they or do they not include the Virgin Conception and Birth and the Resurrection on the third day? I myself have never had any doubt about the matter, and therefore in my letter to Canon Glazebrook I referred to these Resolutions in the briefest possible way. But the Canon does doubt. I must therefore investigate the question.

My readers will, I trust, turn to the Canon's

letter printed above to remind themselves of what he says in this connexion. The important words in his letter seem to me to be these :—

“ We must take ‘ the historical facts ’ to mean such of the statements as appear in the light of our present knowledge to be historical ; and regard the other statements as symbolical. . . . Considering the ambiguous character of the Lambeth declaration, the definite claim made in the memorial, the qualified answer of Convocation, and the reconciling comment of the Primate, I think it cannot fairly be urged that I have defied episcopal authority in writing the words to which you draw attention, and the two Chapters (III. and VII.) upon which they depend for their meaning.”

The Resolution of the Upper House of Convocation and a full report of the debate will be found in the *Chronicle of Convocation*, 1914, No. 2, pp. 260-296, 333-360. That Resolution “ solemnly reaffirms ” two earlier Resolutions, and to this reaffirmation, as we shall see, it adds important clauses of its own.

Resolution of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury passed on April 30, 1914 :—

“ Inasmuch as there is reason to believe that

the minds of many members of the Church of England are perplexed and disquieted at the present time in regard to certain questions of Faith and of Church Order, the Bishops of the Upper House of the Province of Canterbury feel it to be their duty to put forth the following Resolutions :—

“ 1. We call attention to the Resolution which was passed in this House on May 10, 1905, as follows :—

“ ‘ That this House is resolved to maintain unimpaired the Catholic Faith in the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation as contained in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, and in the *Quicunque Vult*, and regards the Faith there presented, both in statements of doctrine and in statements of fact, as the necessary basis on which the teaching of the Church reposes.’

“ We further desire to direct attention afresh to the following Resolution which was unanimously agreed to by the Bishops of the Anglican Communion attending the Lambeth Conference of 1908 :—

“ ‘ The Conference, in view of tendencies widely shewn in the writings of the present

day, hereby places on record its conviction that the historical facts stated in the Creeds are an essential part of the Faith of the Church.'

"2. These Resolutions we desire solemnly to reaffirm, and in accordance therewith we express our deliberate judgment that the denial of any of the historical facts stated in the Creeds goes beyond the limits of legitimate interpretation, and gravely imperils that sincerity of profession which is plainly incumbent on the Ministers of the Word and Sacraments. At the same time, recognising that our generation is called to face new problems raised by historical criticism, we are anxious not to lay unnecessary burdens upon consciences, nor unduly to limit freedom of thought and enquiry whether among clergy or among laity. We desire, therefore, to lay stress on the need of considerateness in dealing with that which is tentative and provisional in the thought and work of earnest and reverent students."

We will take in order the three Resolutions—the two earlier Resolutions, and the Resolution which embodies them.

(i.) I do not speak at any length of the Resolu-

tion of the Upper House in 1905. It appears from the *Chronicle of Convocation*, 1905, No. 2, p. 120, that this Resolution had been drawn up in Committee and that there was no discussion in the House itself. I may add that I was not a member of Convocation when this Resolution was passed. When the two subsequent Resolutions, to which we now turn, were before the Lambeth Conference and the Upper House of Convocation respectively, I was present and I voted.

(ii.) Canon Glazebrook asks the question, "What did the Bishops of the Lambeth Conference mean by saying that 'the historical facts stated in the Creeds are an essential part of the Faith of the Church'?" In his endeavour to answer this question it will be observed that he at once diverts the enquiry into a discussion of passages from a tract by the Bishop of Oxford, from a book by the late Bishop Westcott, and from a tract by myself. On the other hand, he avoids the method of examining the language of the Resolution itself. Now the Resolution contains the following words: "In view of tendencies widely shewn in the writings of the present day." These words are ready to prove a guide to any one who is in doubt as to the meaning of the Bishops. They shew that the Bishops did not

regard themselves as drawing up an abstract Resolution dealing with matters not generally known. The terms therefore which they used cannot have a cryptic meaning. Moreover, it was notorious that writings of the time shewed a tendency to call in question the truth of the clauses of the Apostles' Creed as to the Virgin Birth and as to the Resurrection. It is sufficient to say that the last volume of the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* was published in 1903. The plain logic of the Resolution makes it certain that the Bishops regarded the Creed itself, and not any "tendencies shewn in the writings of the present day," as the standard which determined for them what the historical facts were. In other words, when the Bishops spoke of "the historical facts stated in the Creeds as an essential part of the Faith of the Church," they used the words "the historical facts stated in the Creeds" in their natural sense as meaning "the historical facts stated as historical facts in the Creeds."

There is another consideration to which I must call attention. Let us suppose that, as Canon Glazebrook himself thinks possible, the two articles, "Born of the Virgin Mary" and "The third day he rose again from the dead," were *not* referred to by the Bishops of the Lambeth Conference when they used the phrase, "the historical

facts stated in the Creeds." It is clear that the clauses, "who was conceived by the Holy Ghost" (for that clause is indissolubly linked with the clause "Born of the Virgin Mary"), "He descended into hell," "He ascended into heaven," must also be excluded from the scope of the Bishops' words. What clauses dealing with "historical facts" are left? There remain these two clauses, viz. "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried." The Bishops therefore of the whole Anglican Communion passed a Resolution that "This Conference, in view of tendencies widely shown in the writings of the present day, hereby places on record its conviction that the historical facts stated in the Creeds," that is to say, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried," "are an essential part of the faith of the Church." I cannot but call to mind those blunt but effective words with which Euclid sometimes concludes an argument.

Further, when we are considering the meaning of an author in a certain passage, it is well to enquire whether there is any other passage in his writings in which he treats of the same subject. Acting on this principle I call attention to a highly significant paragraph in the *Encyclical Letter* of the same Bishops who passed the Resolution

under discussion (Official Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1908, pp. 28 f.). It is as follows :—

“ We turn first to the subject of our faith in relation to the thought of the present day. In humble reverence and unalterable devotion we bow before the mystery of the Trinity in Unity, revealed indeed once for all, but revealing to each generation, and not least to our own, ‘ new depths of the Divine.’ We bow before the mystery of God Incarnate in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, this, too, revealed once for all, but revealing to our times with novel clearness both God and man, and interpreting and confirming to us all that we have hoped or dreamed concerning union between them. We reaffirm the essential place of the historic facts stated by the Creeds in the structure of our faith. Many in our days have rashly denied the importance of these facts, but the ideas which these facts have in part generated and have always expressed, cannot be dissociated from them. Without the historic Creeds the ideas would evaporate into unsubstantial vagueness, and Christianity would be in danger of degenerating into a nerveless altruism.”

If words mean anything, then this passage of the

Encyclical Letter of the Lambeth Conference utters an explicit and emphatic warning against that "symbolical" interpretation of the historical clauses of the Apostles' Creed for which Canon Glazebrook urges a "claim." It asserts that, if the historical character of these clauses of the Creed should ever be given up, the "ideas" which alone are conserved by the "symbolical" interpretation would lose their reality and their force.

There is another passage in the Report of the Lambeth Conference for 1908 which it is necessary that I should quote. It is expressly stated in the Report (p. 68) that "the Conference, as a whole, is responsible only for the formal Resolutions agreed to after discussion," and that the Reports of the Committees of the Conference "must be taken as having the authority only of the Committees by whom they were respectively prepared and presented." But there was one significant exception to the rule expressed in the words just quoted. The Conference went out of its way definitely to give its imprimatur to the Report of one Committee. The first of the "Resolutions formally adopted by the Conference 1908" was as follows (Official Report, p. 47) :—

"The Conference commends to Christian people and to all seekers after truth the

Report of the Committee on The Faith and Modern Thought, as a faithful attempt to shew how that claim of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the Church is set to present to each generation, may, under the characteristic conditions of our time, best command allegiance.’

In the Report of the Committee on The Faith and Modern Thought, thus specially invested with the authority of the Conference itself, there occurs the following passage (Official Report, p. 73) :—

“ The truth must shine by its own light ; Christ is His own best witness.

“ But the witness needs to be read, and if we are to discharge our duty we must help men to read it. We must set forth Christ in His simplicity as Him who lived the life of perfect goodness, taught the perfect nature of life and duty in love to God and man, died the death of perfect obedience and perfect self-sacrifice, and won perfect victory, of which His resurrection from the dead on the third day was the seal. It is here that we find the truth of all that has been said in so many forms about coming ‘ back to Christ.’ All the difficulties which our time has felt about proofs and signs have had their advantage in sending us to this

deeper proof and evidence which comes out of Himself.

“ In saying this, it is only right to add (in view of the vague opinion reflected from time to time in current literature that it is possible to reach by critical processes an original non-miraculous substratum of the Gospel history) our conviction that no historical criticism has been, or will be, able to eliminate miracles from the story of the Gospels except by dealing in an arbitrary and unhistorical manner with the evidence.”

I call special attention to the words “ of which His resurrection from the dead *on the third day* was the seal,” and to the last of the three paragraphs. I submit that it is absolutely impossible to suppose that the Bishops who set the seal of their authority on the Report of the Committee containing this passage doubted whether the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of the Lord’s body on the third day were “ historical facts stated in the Creeds.” ¹

¹ The Bishops added the following footnote (p. 73) : “ In using the word *miracles* in a report dealing with scientific thought, we must guard ourselves against the often repeated misapprehension that the Church by that word means breaches or suspensions of the laws of Nature.” They then quote Aug. c. *Faust*. xxvi. 3 : “ We say without impropriety that God does something ‘ against nature ’ which He does against *what we know* in nature. For it is this course of nature which is

(iii.) Lastly, we take in hand the Resolution passed by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury in 1914. I call attention to three points.

(a) In regard to this Resolution Canon Glazebrook in his letter to me (see above) uses the following words: "Their action (*i.e.* the action of the Bishops in Convocation) cannot be understood without recalling the circumstances." As to this I am cordially and entirely at one with him. I would only premise that by "the circumstances" we mean "*all* the circumstances." Now Canon Glazebrook, after referring to the Memorial of which the Council of the Churchmen's Union were the authors and quoting a passage from it, continues thus: "The bishops, *in reply*, after reaffirming the Lambeth declaration, concluded with these words." Again, in the last paragraph of his letter to me the Canon speaks of "the definite claim made *in the memorial, the qualified answer* of Convocation." The italics in these quotations are mine. Clearly the Canon is under the impression that the Bishops' Resolu-

known to us and familiar that we call nature, and when God does anything contrary to this, such events are called marvels, or miracles. But as for that supreme law of nature which escapes our knowledge because we are sinful or because we are still weak, God no more acts against *that* than He acts against Himself."

tion was drawn up in reply to the memorial in which he himself was interested, and that that memorial had a monopoly of the Bishops' attention. There could not be a greater mistake. The Upper House on that occasion had before it nine petitions and memorials, separately presented to the House though in some cases coincident or nearly coincident in language. The presentation of these petitions and memorials is recorded in the *Chronicle of Convocation*, 1914, No. 2, pp. 258 ff. Their text is given, pp. 413 ff. The Canon has quoted in his letter a passage from one of these nine memorials. The tenor of several other of the documents before the House may be judged from the following quotation (p. 416):—

“For the sake, therefore, of ourselves and of our people we are driven to ask our spiritual fathers, First, to repudiate the claims of some clergy to reject the miracles of our Lord's birth of a Virgin and the actual Resurrection of His body from the Tomb, because we believe that these truths lie at the very centre of our Faith, and that the statements of the Bible and the Creeds with regard to them are perfectly plain and unambiguous.”

Since the Bishops had these and other similar words before them, it is clear *ex abundantia* that

they had the Lord's Virgin Birth and the Lord's Resurrection on the third day fully in mind when they used the phrase "the historical facts stated in the Creeds." The Bishops would not have been honest men if, while they used words which must have appeared to the petitioners to refer to those articles of the Creed which alone were alluded to in the memorials, yet in their intention they themselves did not refer to those articles.

(b) I must now call attention to another oversight on the part of the Canon even more serious than that one of which I have just spoken. After quoting the passage from the memorial of the Churchmen's Union, he writes thus: "The bishops, in reply, after reaffirming the Lambeth declaration, concluded with these words: 'At the same time, recognising that our generation is called to face new problems, etc.' " From this passage the readers of the Canon's letter as it appeared in the *Times* and elsewhere, none of whom (we may safely say) had the text of the Bishops' Resolution before them, must inevitably have inferred that the Bishops reaffirmed the Resolution of the Lambeth Conference and then at once concluded with the sentence which the Canon quotes: "At the same time, recognising that, etc.," so that these last words were intended by the Bishops to qualify the Lambeth Conference

Resolution. They must, that is, have inferred that the Bishops reaffirmed indeed the Lambeth Conference Resolution, but at the same time by a rider weakened its force. What then is the fact? The fact is that between the words "These Resolutions we desire solemnly to reaffirm" and the words "At the same time, recognising, etc." there stand in the Resolution of Convocation (see the Resolution printed at length above) the words which follow :—

"and in accordance therewith to express our deliberate judgment that the denial of any of the historical facts stated in the Creeds goes beyond the limits of legitimate interpretation, and gravely imperils that sincerity of profession which is plainly incumbent on the ministers of the Word and Sacraments."

These words Canon Glazebrook wholly ignores. It is difficult to exaggerate the seriousness of this neglect. For they are momentous words; and they are absolutely essential to an understanding of the position of the Bishops. It is only in the light of them, as having immediately preceded, that the sentences which follow can be rightly estimated, the sentences, I mean, in which the Bishops "lay stress on the need of considerateness in dealing with that which is tentative and

provisional in the thought and work of earnest and reverent students." In passing, I desire to call attention to the careful limitation of the scope of this sentence conveyed by the phrase "that which is tentative and provisional." Further, like the passage which I quoted above from the *Encyclical Letter* of the Lambeth Conference, the portion of the Resolution of Convocation which Canon Glazebrook neglects deals explicitly and emphatically with the "claim" to substitute a "symbolical" for an historical interpretation of those clauses of the Apostles' Creed which refer to the alleged events of our Lord's life on earth from His conception to His Ascension. As the Bishops at the Lambeth Conference pointed out the disintegrating effects on the Christian faith which in their judgment would follow such a substitution, so the Bishops in Convocation uttered a grave warning against the moral dangers involved in this transgression of "the limits of legitimate interpretation."

(c) Lastly, I ought to notice Canon Glazebrook's quotation from the speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which he calls "the reconciling comment of the Primate." The Archbishop was at this point (*Chronicle of Convocation*, p. 359) referring to the memorial put forward by the Council of the Churchmen's Union. His words

were carefully chosen. I quote them, printing in italics those expressions of which in my judgment full account must be taken.

“ *I do not wish to be too dogmatic about it, but I do not myself see anything in the actual wording of [that memorial] which is necessarily inconsistent with what we are now declaring. . . . I confess that I find nothing in the two [i.e. the memorial and the Bishops’ proposed Resolution] that is radically and essentially inconsistent.*”

It must be remembered that the Archbishop’s position on the subject of the Resolution cannot be rightly inferred from one small fragment of a long speech. But if we look only at the passage to which Canon Glazebrook draws attention, obviously the Archbishop did not profess agreement with the words of the memorial as they might be interpreted by all and by every one of the signatories. When at the time I listened to the Archbishop, carefully noting the language which he used, I agreed with what he said. I agree with it now. Indeed, earlier in the debate that day I had endeavoured to express my own earnest desire for the recognition of a large but ordered liberty. I hope that I am not doing what is out of place if I venture to quote a portion

of the report of my speech in the *Chronicle of Convocation* (pp. 336 f.). I do so because in that debate under a great sense of responsibility I did my best to put into words some of my deepest convictions on this subject. And at this time, when, under a sense of responsibility at least as great as I felt then, I am acting as I now feel it my duty to act, I desire to repeat and to re-affirm what I then said as to rightful freedom of thought and of speech.

“He was sure that they would all allow that the time in which they were called to work, and in which their brethren were called to work in the universities and elsewhere, was an anxious and difficult time. New studies had arisen, new methods of research, new modes of thought, new knowledge, and he thought it was only fair and right to say that at least in their present form they had arisen since those great men, Dr. Westcott and Dr. Lightfoot, studied and wrote, and they must, he thought, remember that when they referred to their writings. At the present time their mental and spiritual eye was not accustomed to the new light. They were passing through a period of transition, and he thought that they must admit that all things were not so

clear and so precise as they appeared to be to their fathers and to their grandfathers. There was a larger margin of uncertainty : some matters there were on which to some extent they suspended a final judgment. All evidence was not the same evidence even in regard to those great facts stated in the Creed ; and all faith was not the same faith. There were degrees of assurance, and to allow that there were degrees of assurance, degrees of faith, was not equivalent to the denial of any of those statements of fact. All that being so, he was sure that they would feel, and they did feel, deep sympathy with those students who were called, as their peculiar work in the Church, to face these problems of modern days. He did claim for them wide limits of thought and of enquiry. The earnest student must examine positions which to many a devout believer seemed painful, strange, and full of hazard. In the process of examining these positions, there might be many stages through which he passed which were provisional and tentative, and it was of the first importance that a large liberty of thought, and even a large liberty of expression, should be allowed to him ; that he should not be made an offender for a rash word or for an

unqualified assertion. But he said this always with the proviso that the Creeds set a clear boundary as to the deliberate conclusions which it was legitimate for such a student to maintain as an officer in the Church of Christ which held as its basis the historic faith. He hoped that men would not look upon Bishops as though they were like the gods of Epicurus, putting forth their Resolutions, themselves untouched by the perplexities which troubled others. Perhaps he could only put this in a concrete and personal form. He at least had tasted to the full the distress which was perhaps inseparable from trying honestly to face the problems of to-day. He had worked, and he had thought, under deep clouds of perplexity. Therefore, he at least, and he was sure their lordships were with him, could sympathise, with all his soul, with those of his brethren who were called to be students in those matters when a trial of their faith overtook them. But while he said that, he believed it was their bounden duty in the sight of God solemnly to warn themselves and to warn others of the serious obligations under which they were as ministers of the Church, and also of the grave peril of anything approaching a lax and arbitrary interpretation

of those obligations which they acknowledged. It was because the Resolution sounded the two notes, the note of earnest sympathy with their brethren and the note of grave warning, that he could give to it his clear and deliberate adhesion."

I must apologise to my readers for detaining them so long over Canon Glazebrook's letter to me. I think, however, that they will agree with me that I could not do otherwise than shew how serious are the omissions and the mistakes which characterise his treatment of the Resolutions of the Lambeth Conference and of Convocation. At the same time I am greatly obliged to him for having made it necessary for me to put beyond doubt, as I venture to think, the meaning of the Bishops' Resolutions both at the Lambeth Conference and also in Convocation and to shew that these Resolutions exclude, and were intended to exclude, the "claim" as to the interpretation of the Apostles' Creed which he puts forward.

At this point I cannot refrain from giving expression to my own deep sense of the limitations under which we think and speak in regard to those subjects to which it is now my duty to turn. With the great final realities of the Lord's life on

earth, His birth, His death, His Resurrection, His Ascension, our minds, constituted as they now are, are unable to deal in an absolute and ultimate fashion. So it is also with the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Our best thoughts on all these things are wholly inadequate. And our words only partially express those conceptions which flash upon our minds in moments of higher insight and then disappear again. By their realism popular hymns, coloured windows, and the frescoes over the chancel arches of many of our churches have done much to vulgarise for us these supreme events and expectations, and to lower our whole attitude towards them. Probably these representations are in part responsible for the desire which some feel to sublimate, and to resolve into ideas, those things in the past and in the future which Christian people have always regarded as events already realised or to be realised hereafter. For myself I greatly shrink from speaking of these matters, especially in the way of argument or controversy, lest I fall into a precision or a definiteness which I know is beyond my powers. I cannot present, and I do not wish to endeavour to present, even to my own mind a picture of the risen or the ascending Lord, or, as it were, to draw up a programme of "the last things." "Faith and not sight" is the essential

characteristic of whatsoever vision we are allowed here and now to attain to.

I shall now consider (i.) the analogy which Canon Glazebrook asserts to exist between the two articles of the Apostles' Creed which are in question and four other articles of that Creed; (ii.) the arguments which he adduces against the acceptance of these two articles in their obvious meaning, that is, as describing historical events; (iii.) the legitimacy of the so-called "symbolical" interpretation of the historical articles of the Creed.

CHAPTER II

THE CLAUSES OF THE APOSTLES' CREED

CANON GLAZEBROOK writes thus (p. 77) : " Some clauses in the Apostles' Creed, which were unquestionably believed by the early Church to be literal statements of fact, are now regarded by Churchmen of all schools as purely symbolical. . . . The clauses in question are as follows :

' He descended into hell.
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth at the right hand of God.
The resurrection of the flesh.' "

The Canon adds : " In these four cases a change of interpretation has been generally accepted since Galileo narrowly escaped being burnt alive for saying that the earth moved round the sun." What connexion there is between Galileo's escape and the last two of these four articles I do not know ; but let that pass. We will now

consider these four articles. I shall take them in the reverse order.

(i.) "The resurrection of the flesh." There is no doubt, as the Canon points out (p. 78), that "of the flesh" is the ancient Western credal phrase, and that it is found in the Baptismal Offices of the Prayer Book and in the Visitation of the Sick. In the Creed at Mattins and Evensong the words "of the body" are substituted. But it may be questioned whether St. Paul would have felt that, in this connexion, there is that sharp distinction between "flesh" and "body" which is often drawn. The "flesh" is the material of the "body"; and the "body" is the form of the "flesh." Note the sequence (I had almost said the interchange) of the two words in 1 Cor. xv. 35-40: "How are the dead raised? and with what manner of *body* do they come? . . . That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the *body* that shall be . . . God giveth it a *body* . . . and to each seed a *body* of its own. All *flesh* is not the same *flesh*; but there is one *flesh* of men, and another *flesh* of beasts. . . . There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial" (in the last clause the word "body" has a different connotation). But it is unnecessary to pursue the matter further now. To resume: of this clause the Canon says that it "contradicts the teaching of St. Paul (see Chapter III.)." What he

says in Chapter III. (p. 24) is contained in the following words : “ ‘Flesh and blood,’ he writes, ‘cannot inherit the kingdom of God.’ That which will rise is not a natural but a ‘spiritual body.’ ” Does the clause of the Creed “The resurrection of the flesh” contradict the teaching of St. Paul? Let us without more ado look at the most important words in the passage which St. Paul devotes to this subject (1 Cor. xv. 35-38, 50-54) : “*Thou sowest not the body that shall be . . . God giveth it a body as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. . . .* Now this I say, brethren, that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God* ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery : We shall not all sleep but *we shall all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be *raised incorruptible*, and *we shall be changed*.” I have printed in italics the words which seem to me chiefly important for our present purpose. Over against the assertion that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” St. Paul places the other assertion twice repeated, “We shall all be changed,” “We shall be changed.” We at once compare a later saying of the Apostle (to which I shall have occasion to return in another connexion) : “who [*i.e.* the Lord Jesus Christ]

shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation" (Phil. iii. 21). The Resurrection, then, in St. Paul's teaching essentially involves a "change," a "fashioning anew" in that which is raised. Apart from that "change," that "fashioning anew," that which is raised "cannot enter into the kingdom of God." We may speak of the Resurrection in regard to that which is raised *a parte ante* or *a parte post*, somewhat as we may speak, *e.g.*, of the accession of Richard Duke of Gloucester or of the accession of King Richard the Third. We may speak, that is, of the resurrection of the seed or of the resurrection of the ear of wheat; of the resurrection of the flesh or of the resurrection of the spiritual body. The important point is to observe that St. Paul asserts the Resurrection to be in its very nature a crisis of change. I venture therefore to say that a study of St. Paul's actual words shews that there is no contradiction between his teaching and the article of the Creed—"the resurrection of the flesh."

It is not without significance that here the Canon simply revives a cavil urged by Celsus in the second century. Origen, quoting the words of St. Paul in 1 Cor. xv. as I have done, answers Celsus substantially as I have just answered the Canon. "Neither we," he writes (*contra Celsum* v. 18), "nor the sacred Scriptures assert that those who

died long ago shall rise again from the earth and live in the actual flesh (*αὐταῖς σαρκί*) without its undergoing a change for the better. And Celsus when he says this calumniates (*συκοφαντεῖ*) us."

(ii.) "And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."¹ Of this article of the Creed the Canon says that it "ascribes a human body to God the Father" (p. 78). The Canon therefore maintains that there is a real analogy between a man saying of our Lord that He "sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty" without believing that God the Father Almighty has a human body, and on the other hand a man saying of our Lord that He "was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," without believing that our Lord was born of a Virgin; or again, a man saying of our Lord that "the third day He rose again from the dead," without believing that the Lord rose again from the dead on the third day and that the Lord's Resurrection was a resurrection of the body. In regard to this alleged analogy I maintain that among Christians there has always been so clear and so all but universal a belief that God is incorporeal that no sane Christian

¹ It is just worth noticing that the Prayer Book has (1) in Mattins and Evensong "*on* the right hand"; (2) in the Baptismal Offices, the Catechism, and the Visitation of the Sick "*at* the right hand." The original Latin is "*ad dexteram*."

has ever been tempted to suppose that the clause of the Creed "And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty"—a phrase the literary history of which goes back to Psalm cx.—implies that God the Father has a human body. I venture to say that a Christian who taught that God has a human body, whether in ancient or in modern times, would have incurred the censure of his fellow Christians. I must apologise to my readers for seriously arguing this matter, and for making good my assertion by a brief *catena* of passages.

1. Bishop John Pearson (died 1686), commenting on this article in his book on the Creed, writes : "God being a spirit can have no material or corporeal parts ; and consequently as He hath no body, so in a proper sense can He have no hands at all ; but because God is pleased to descend to our capacity, and not only to speak by the mouths of men, but also after the manner of men, He expresseth that which is in Him by some analogy with that which belongs to us."

2. The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1571). The first Article says : "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions."

3. Thomas Aquinas (died 1274), *Summa Theologiae*, Pars Prima, Quaest. III. Art. I. "utrum Deus sit corpus." The conclusions are :

"Unde manifestum est quod Deus non est corpus. . . . Impossibile est igitur Deum esse corpus."

4. John of Damascus (died *circa* 760), *De Fide Orthodoxa*, i. iii.: "We cannot properly express many of the notions about God which we dimly apprehend. We are forced to use terms on our own level to set forth things that are above us. That God is without beginning, without end, eternal, everlasting, uncreate, . . . without body (*ἄσώματος*), this we know and confess."

5. St. Augustine (died 430), *de Fide et Symbolo*, 14: "We believe also that He sitteth at the right hand of the Father. Yet it must not for this reason be supposed that God the Father is, so to speak, comprehended in a human form, so that, when men think of Him, the idea of a right side or of a left should come into their minds or that, whereas the Father is said to sit, it should be imagined that He does so by bending His knees, lest we should fall into that blasphemy for which the Apostle called them accursed who changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible men."

6. The following passage from Socrates (*H.E.* vi. 7) deals with troubles at Alexandria at the very close of the fourth century: "A little time

before a dispute had been started whether God is a body and has the form of a man or whether He is without body and is free from human or any bodily shape. From this dispute arose strifes and quarrels among very many persons, some favouring one opinion and others supporting the other. And in particular many of the simple ascetics held that God is corporeal and of human form; but most people condemned these men, and asserted that God is without body, and that He is wholly apart from any bodily form whatsoever. With these latter Theophilus, the Bishop of Alexandria, agreed, so that in the church before the congregation he attacked those who said that God has a man's form, and taught that God is without body." The opening words in the passage appear to refer to a sect among the monks called the Audiani; see Epiph., *Contr. Haer.*, iii. 1. Theophilus was later on forced to take the Anti-Origenistic side; see e.g. Dr. Bright's article on Theophilus of Alexandria in Smith's *D.C.B.* iv. pp. 1001 ff.

7. The spiritual nature of God was a commonplace among the Apologists of the second century in their controversy with the heathen and with the Jews. Thus e.g. Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 15: "The perfect God hath not flesh (*ἄσαρκος*), but man is flesh." Again ch. 25: "Some one

says that God is a body, but I say that God is without body."

8. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 114: "And again when it saith [Ps. viii. 3], 'I will behold the heavens, the works of Thy fingers,' unless I hear herein of the work of His Word, I shall not hear intelligently, but I shall hear according to the doctrine of those teachers among you Jews who imagine that He who is the Father of all things and the ingenerate God is like a composite animal and has hands and feet and fingers and a soul."

9. To these last two passages I append a noble passage from the earliest Apology which has come down to us, that of Aristides, because, though it does not expressly deny that God has a body, it is thoroughly typical of the Christian teaching of the time on the nature of God. It runs as follows: "I say that God who formed the universe and holdeth it together is without beginning and everlasting, immortal, lacking nothing, far above all passions and failings, anger, forgetfulness, ignorance, and all things like unto these. And through Him have all things been formed. He needeth not sacrifice or libation, nor any of the things which appear; but Him do all men need." ¹

¹ *Texts and Studies*, I. i. p. 100.

10. St. John iv. 24, πνεῦμα ὁ θεός. God is spirit.

(iii.) (iv.) "He descended into hell." "He ascended into heaven." It will be convenient to consider these two articles together. Of them Canon Glazebrook says (p. 78), that they "have no literal meaning except for those (if any yet remain) who regard the earth as the fixed centre of creation, with a hollow space underneath for Hades and a solid vault overhead."

The proposition which the Canon sets forth in the words just quoted is in itself undoubtedly true. The only real question is whether it is conclusive or pertinent in support of the "claim" that it is legitimate to interpret the historical articles of the Creed symbolically.

We all agree in *not* thinking that God dwells somewhere in the vast expanse over our heads; we all agree in *not* thinking that the dead exist somewhere beneath our feet. We all therefore in the Creed attach to the terms "ascend" and "descend" a figurative meaning. In other words, in the Creed we all use precisely that kind of language which we all habitually use in common life, and which our ancestors have used generation after generation in the past. The meaning of the terms in question, so far as it has ever changed, has changed gradually, and there is no evidence,

so far as I know, that at any stage of this gradual evolution there has ever been any controversy or anything of conscious unverity on the part of those who used them. "But," to quote the words of the late Professor Henry Sidgwick,¹ "that is because the words of the Creed present no definite barrier to the change: had the words of the Article [*i.e.* Article iv.] been used, the case would have been quite different. As it is, a phrase, which was always in part a metaphor, has come to be understood as completely metaphorical or symbolical, by a perfectly smooth transition of thought."

On the one hand, to-day we all hold the Copernican theory, and we all habitually speak as if we did not. Two instances will suffice. "It is curious," wrote Professor Sidgwick (p. 162, note), "to note how the imagination, as distinct from the thought, of the region of departed spirits as being *beneath* the region of living men, still survives in the modern mind, notwithstanding the long domination of a conception of the physical universe that might have been expected to exclude it. We find it in so intensely serious

¹ "Clerical Veracity" in *Practical Ethics*, 1898, p. 162. The two essays on "The Ethics of Religious Conformity" and on "Clerical Veracity" are both worthy of careful study. Professor Sidgwick of course looked on the whole group of questions from a detached position.

and profoundly modern a poem as Tennyson's *In Memoriam* :

' So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise *below*,
Thy kindred with the great of old.' "

Again, Canon Glazebrook in the volume which we are considering (p. 35) writes as follows : " On the day of each man's death the judgment, which began in his childhood, is completed ; and a new condition is assigned to him, corresponding in some way with his earthly life. If the sentence be not ' death,' *the soul rises from earth in a spiritual body.*" The italics are mine. With this last quotation before me I assert with some confidence that, if to-day we had to draw up a brief statement embodying the essential ideas expressed in the articles of the Apostles' Creed under discussion, we should employ exactly the same language as we actually find in the Apostles' Creed.

On the other hand, when no one held the Copernican theory, men used the terms " ascend " and " descend " as at least " in part a metaphor." They spoke of " ascending to heaven " and " descending to hell," not mainly because they had any theory of the universe in their minds, nor because they were influenced by those mythological ideas which were literary commonplaces.

Rather they, like ourselves, instinctively connected with the "bright blue sky," the *caeli caerula* of the Latin poets, the ideas of majesty and of purity. They naturally allowed the associations of the grave, into which the bodies of the dead "descended," to suggest to them the kind of language in which they described the process of death and the state of the dead. Such modes of speech were, I believe, at least as much instinctive and imaginative as consciously theoretical or mythological. Let me give one instance of such usage from the New Testament and group later instances round it. In John iii. 13 we read : "No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven." The thought of this passage is not spatial but mystical. I notice two points. (i.) It matters not for my present purpose whether the words "which is in heaven" are original or are a gloss. If they are a gloss, the gloss goes back to the second century,¹ and is an example of early Christian modes of speech ; and certainly in this form the passage was widely and very generally read throughout Christendom. So read, it helped men to think of the Incarnation as

¹ This plainly appears from the fact that the clause has a place in many Old Latin MSS., and in both the Old Syriac MSS. (the Curetonian and the Sinaitic).

manifested indeed in space, yet not as finally conditioned by space, but as ultimately transcending our common categories of place and time. We may instance the following passages from Christian literature: (a) Augustine's epigram in his commentary on this passage of St. John: "Natus de matre, non recedens a patre." (b) The third Letter of Cyril of Alexandria to Nestorius, 3: "He ever continueth the same, wholly the same, according to the Scriptures. And when He was seen of men, a babe and wrapped in swaddling clothes, nay when He was still in the bosom of the Virgin, His Mother, He was, as God, filling creation and was enthroned with Him who hath begotten Him." (c) The Letter of Leo the Great to Flavian (the Tome of Leo), 4: "As the Word departeth not from an equality with the glory of the Father, so the flesh abandoneth not the nature which belongeth to our race." (d) The hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas for the festival of Corpus Christi:

Verbum supernum prodiens,
Nec Patris linguens dexteram,
 Ad opus suum exiens,
 Venit ad vitæ vesperam.¹

¹ The heavenly Word proceeding forth,
Yet leaving not the Father's side,
 Accomplishing His work on earth,
 Had reached at length life's eventide.
Hymns A. and M. 311; from Dr. Neale's translation.

(ii.) It is even more important that we should observe St. John's description of the Incarnation as a descent from heaven—"He that descended out of heaven." Here, certainly, there is no thought of a journey from heaven to earth, no thought of a descent through space. The language is plainly figurative (comp. vi. 33, 38, 41 f., 50 f., 58). And this figurative language passed into the great Eastern (Greek) creeds. In the Creed put forth by the Council of Nicaea we have the following clause: "Who for us men and for our salvation *came down*, and was made flesh, and became man." In the revised form of the Nicene Creed, commonly known as the "Constantinopolitan" Creed, that form which has a place in the Eucharistic offices of the West, and which is familiar to us in the English service of Holy Communion, the clause is expanded—"Who for us men and for our salvation *came down from heaven*, and was made flesh of the Holy Ghost and Mary the Virgin, and became man." Plainly the words "Who . . . came down from heaven" are mystical and not in any literal sense spatial. Further, when we repeat the familiar English version we see no correspondence between the clause "Who . . . came down from heaven" and the later clause "And ascended into heaven." But in the original Greek there is an exact correspondence

between the two clauses which is obliterated in the English translation—*κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς* (descended from heaven, ascended into heaven). If, then, the clause as to the Incarnation is plainly mystical or figurative,¹ the literal meaning of the correlative clause as to the Ascension, though doubtless included, was not of the essence of this confession of the Christian faith.

I have appealed to the Greek Creeds of the fourth century. I now appeal to a Latin commentary on a Latin Creed which belongs to the close of the same century. Rufinus of Aquileia gives us the Creed of his native town. It is remarkable as the earliest Latin Creed which contains one of the clauses now before us—the clause *Descendit in inferna* (He descended into hell). In his Commentary on this Creed (§ 29) the following passage occurs, which seems to me of quite decisive import :—

“*Inferna et superna nobis dicuntur, qui, certa corporis circumscriptione conclusi, intra*

¹ Compare the exposition of the clause as to the Incarnation given by Cyril of Alexandria in his third letter to Nestorius, 3 : ὁ . . . τῆς ἡμετέρας ἕνεκα σωτηρίας κατελθὼν καὶ καθείς ἑαυτὸν εἰς κένωσιν (words which may be thus literally translated : “Who . . . for our salvation came down and brought Himself down even unto emptying”). It should be noticed that the correspondence between the two clauses of the Creed which is lost in the English is retained in the Latin “*Qui . . . descendit de caelis . . . Et ascendit in caelum.*”

regionis praescripti nobis terminos continemur. Deo autem, qui ubique est et nusquam deest, quid infernum est, aut quid supernum? ” (*“ We speak of ‘ things below ’ and of ‘ things above ’ ; for, shut up in the narrow circumference of the body, we are confined within the limits of the place which is appointed to us. But to God, who is everywhere present and nowhere absent, what is ‘ below ’ or what is ‘ above ’ ? ”*)

This investigation, necessarily brief, has, I venture to say with confidence, completely established Professor Henry Sidgwick’s position that the phrase “ He ascended into heaven ” was “ always in part a metaphor,” and that it “ has come to be understood as completely metaphorical or symbolical, by a perfectly smooth transition of thought.”

I venture to think that I have shewn that there is no analogy between a man saying of our Lord that “ He descended into hell . . . He ascended into heaven ” without believing that heaven is a place above our heads and hell a place beneath our feet, and on the other hand, a man saying of our Lord that He “ was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary ” without believing that the Lord was born of a Virgin ; or again,

of a man saying of our Lord that "the third day He rose again from the dead" without believing that the Lord rose again from the dead on the third day, and that the Lord's Resurrection was a resurrection of the body.

I have elsewhere¹ defined the meaning with which I myself repeat the Article of the Creed as to the Ascension. "When we contemplate the Ascension," so I wrote two years ago, "we must guard ourselves against resting in any conception of a physical elevation as in itself a final and absolute truth. We may, I believe, fearlessly accept the Ascension (such an Ascension as is recorded by St. Luke) as an historical event, and find in the historical event a parable unfolding to us men a spiritual and divine truth about the Lord Jesus Christ."²

I have thus given reasons for the opinion that the analogy between the two articles of the Creed and the four articles just considered does not bear examination, and therefore that it cannot be pleaded as a justification of the "claim" to interpret the two articles "symbolically."

¹ *The Meaning of the Creed, Papers on the Apostles' Creed*, edited by the Rev. G. K. A. Bell (pp. 126 f.).

² See the Additional Note on the Ascension at the end of this volume.

CHAPTER III

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

WE pass now to consider the arguments which Canon Glazebrook adduces against the acceptance of the two clauses of the Apostles' Creed, which are under discussion, in their obvious meaning, that is, as describing historical events. It must be observed that most, if not all, of these arguments are not new, and that some at least of the arguments which I shall adduce on the other side have in some form or another been advanced before. The trouble is that those whom the Canon represents do not examine the latter group of arguments and continue to urge the former.

“ Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.”

The pertinent passage in Canon Glazebrook's book is as follows (p. 70) :—

“ As to the Virgin Birth it is urged that the

evidence is not such as to compel belief. For the narratives in St. Matthew and in St. Luke are barely reconcilable, while both include genealogies which have no meaning unless Joseph was the actual father of Jesus. St. Paul was evidently not acquainted with the story when he wrote the opening verses of Romans, where the mention of it would have greatly strengthened his argument. The author of St. John's Gospel was well acquainted with all the Synoptic Gospels, and he omits all reference to this event. Can he have done so for any reason except that he did not believe it to be a fact ? ”

I will take seriatim the assertions made in this paragraph.

(i.) “ The narratives in St. Matthew and in St. Luke are barely reconcilable.” Here Canon Glazebrook makes a general statement, and only for this general statement can he be held responsible. But obviously the critic of such a general statement must go into details.

It is important then to observe that the alleged discrepancies between the Gospels occur in the two stories of the Lord's childhood after His birth rather than in the two stories of what immediately concerns His birth itself. As to the latter indeed,

to take one concrete objection, Professor Lobstein¹ asserts that "the scene of the annunciation in Luke is quite unlike that in Matthew." A moment's reflection shews us that the validity of this criticism wholly depends upon the assumption that, if there was any "annunciation," it must have been a single event, some sort of formal ceremony, which, like the coronation of a sovereign, could only take place once. The Professor is deceived by the later associations which have gathered round the ecclesiastical term "*the Annunciation*." In reality there is no reason whatever why two persons should not receive in two different ways an intimation of the same divine interposition; and this is all that St. Matthew and St. Luke narrate.

As to the alleged discrepancies in the surrounding narratives, I think that I may take as typical the statement of Professor Usener in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, art. "Nativity" (iii. 3343):—

"Joseph's home in Mt. is Bethlehem, in Lk. Nazareth; the divinity of Christ is attested in Lk. by the angel's words to the shepherds and the song of the heavenly host, in Mt. by the appearance of the star in the East; the new-born Messiah receives his first

¹ *The Virgin Birth of Christ*, E.T., p. 43.

adoration in Lk. from the shepherds, in Mt. from the Magi. In Mt. the family of the Saviour flees from the wrath of Herod to Egypt and afterwards avoids Archelaus by settling in Nazareth ; in Lk., after fulfilment of all the ceremonial duties arising out of the birth, the return is made to Nazareth direct. There, according to Lk., the youth of the Saviour is spent quietly and uninterruptedly, whilst in Mt. his earlier years are disturbed by perils and changes of abode. A still deeper contrast emerges as soon as Lk.'s narrative has been freed from a later accretion " [*i.e.* Lk. i. 34, 35].

Some of these objections seem to me to disappear directly the solvent of common sense is applied. For example, St. Matthew does not say that the Magi were the *first* to offer adoration to the new-born Messiah ; nor does St. Luke intimate that the shepherds had none who followed them as visitors to the cradle at Bethlehem. Yet the Professor's criticism wholly depends on the word " first " being that of the Evangelist and not of the critic. In reviewing the whole paragraph quoted above from Professor Usener's article, especially in regard to the part which Bethlehem and Nazareth play in the two stories,

I venture to repeat what I have said elsewhere¹:—

“ When we compare the two versions of the story of the Lord’s birth, it must be allowed that, though the discrepancies between them are often exaggerated, it is not easy to harmonise them. But the difficulty caused by the variations between them is only serious to those, whether defenders or assailants of their historical character, who postulate the inerrancy of the Gospels in matters of detail. They do not appear, either in magnitude or in character, to be other than we should naturally expect in the case of two independent writers who edited different accounts of events which had taken place more than sixty years earlier, and who had themselves no personal or complete knowledge of the facts, and, when they wrote, were probably far from those who could assist them.”

(ii.) “ Both [narratives] include genealogies which have no meaning unless Joseph was the actual father of Jesus.” Have they no meaning

¹ *The Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism*, p. 63. In this essay I have considered, among other matters connected with the Virgin Birth, the wholly arbitrary excision of Luke i. 34, 35, and the difficulty raised in many minds by the angelical appearances which are so prominent in these narratives.

except on this supposition? Are they concerned with this supposition one way or another? We know from Josephus that genealogies were carefully preserved among the Jews, and that they were kept in the public archives.¹ Thus genealogies were legal documents. The importance of the genealogies of our Lord therefore was a legal importance. This is the case with both genealogies. They differ indeed. It is probable that the genealogy incorporated in St. Luke gives the direct line, and that that incorporated in St. Matthew, being artificially arranged in groups of fourteen generations, is designed to bring out certain aspects of the family tree. But the primary purpose of both is the same. Though the one extends the line of our Lord's descent to Abraham, and the other to "Adam, the son of God," yet their real significance lay in this, that they guaranteed our Lord's legal position as "Son of David." "It is plain that the right to inheritance in the dynasty was possessed by Joseph and it would appear from the genealogy that this was complete. If so, the heirship of Jesus was also complete; the unusual character of His birth affecting it not at all. For according to all law, Jewish and Gentile, Jesus born after, and probably many months after, the marriage, was

¹ Josephus, *Vita* i.; *Contra Apionem* i. 7.

fully heir to Joseph. No Jew in those days, or, I think, in ours, would seriously deny it. Jesus, then, was in the direct line of inheritance to the throne of David.”¹ We probably do not realise how important a part the fact that Jesus was the heir of the royal house played in His earthly life and in determining the relation of the people to Him. Individuals addressed Him as Son of David when they sought His help (*e.g.* Matt. ix. 27; xv. 22). At the time of the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem it was the assurance that this title belonged to Him which roused the enthusiasm of the crowds, and even of the children (Matt. xxi. 9, 15). His royal descent was of conspicuous moment in the trial before Pilate (Lk. xxiii. 2 f.). It inspired the mockery first of the Roman soldiers and then of the chief priests (Matt. xxvii. 29, 42). It found expression in the title which was placed over His head as He hung upon the Cross (*e.g.* Matt. xxvii. 37). The two genealogies, which explain these incidents, are concerned with the Lord’s *legal* relation to Joseph.

(iii.) “ St. Paul was evidently not acquainted

¹ Lukyn Williams, *The Hebrew-Jewish Messiah*, p. 263. Dr. Lukyn Williams (who in the above quotation is referring to the genealogy in St. Matthew) adds in a footnote the following words: “ Although in Luke ii. 5 Mary is said to be ‘ betrothed,’ this must not be understood in the weak modern sense, for if they had not been married Joseph and she could not have travelled together.”

with the story when he wrote the opening verses of Romans, where the mention of it would have greatly strengthened his argument." The opening verses of the Epistle to the Romans are as follows :—

“ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead ; even Jesus Christ our Lord.”

I confess that I do not know what Canon Glazebrook means by St. Paul's "argument." I venture to say that in these brief opening sentences of the Epistle there is no argument. The Apostle begins his letter by a reference to "the gospel of God," which was to be his theme. This gospel had been foretold by the Prophets ; for the Prophets had prophesied of the Messiah. To the Messiah two titles pre-eminently belonged. The Messiah was son of David. The Messiah was Son of God. The claim of Jesus to both these titles was established by facts which were notorious. Jesus had been born into David's family,

and was the heir of David's line (see above on the genealogies). Jesus was declared ¹ by the Resurrection to be Son of God. Such, I believe, is the line of St. Paul's thought in this short prologue to the Epistle. He is referring to the claim of his Master justified by facts which were within the knowledge of all who knew anything about the new sect. I do not myself see how here, at least without a long explanation, he could have referred to the Virgin Birth; nor, when he had the Resurrection to appeal to, was such a reference called for.

To infer from St. Paul's silence as to the Virgin Birth here and generally in his Epistles that he was ignorant of it is indeed rash. For two considerations must be borne in mind.

(1) In the Acts (i. 21 f. ; comp. x. 37) we learn that the recognised limits of the witness of an Apostle were the Baptism of John and the Ascension. And this statement of the Acts is independently confirmed by the beginning of St. Mark's Gospel. In regard to the Gospel according to St. Mark (if I may be allowed to diverge into a brief parenthesis), the fact must not be overlooked that St. Mark does not give any information of any kind on the subject of

¹ Compare Acts xvii. 31 (the close of a speech full of characteristically Pauline thoughts and phrases).

our Lord's birth. But in vi. 3 he puts the phrase "the son of Mary" into the mouth of the Jews.¹ This is a very remarkable fact, because a metonymic was most rare, if it was not wholly unknown, among the Jews of our Lord's time.² To my mind the attitude of St. Mark is full of significance. The interval between the date of St. Mark's Gospel and that of St. Luke's cannot, I believe, be regarded as so great³ as to allow us to suppose that, when St. Mark wrote, the story of the Virgin Birth was unknown at least to the inner circle of the disciples at Jerusalem, with whom St. Mark was closely connected. St. Mark abstains from saying a single word which contradicts that story, and incidentally uses a remarkable phrase which supports it.

(2) What is St. Paul's relation to the facts of our Lord's life? On the one hand he had sojourned in Jerusalem, if not during, yet certainly just after, the Passion and the Resurrection; and

¹ The evidence is decisive against the reading "son of the carpenter."

² Box, *The Virgin Birth of Jesus*, pp. 139 f. Without, of course, endorsing everything in this book, I should like to say that it seems to me a scholarly work with a real title to be regarded as a specimen of "the new learning." Those who uphold the "claim" put forward in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* ought to endeavour to answer its several arguments. It was published in 1916.

³ Harnack, *Date of the Acts and the Synoptic Gospels*, E.T., pp. 124, 133.

that before his conversion he was, as an enemy, deeply interested in matters connected with Jesus of Nazareth is beyond dispute. Further, he himself tells us (Gal. i. 18 f.; ii. 9) that after his conversion he spent a fortnight at Jerusalem with Cephas and James, and that on a later occasion he met the Apostle John also in the holy city. It is therefore impossible to suppose that St. Paul was not well acquainted with the facts of our Lord's life. On the other hand, if we argue that silence proves ignorance, we must maintain that St. Paul knew nothing about the events of our Lord's life on earth except that He was "born of a woman," that He was of the lineage of David, that on the night of the betrayal He instituted the Lord's Supper, that He died on the Cross, that He was buried, that He rose on the third day, and that He ascended into heaven. The Resurrection is the only event as to which he refers to any details (1 Cor. xv. 3 ff.) ; and in this connexion he refrains from noticing any appearances of the risen Lord to individuals with the exception of those granted to the two "pillars" of the Church, Cephas and James, whose names were well known in all the churches. Moreover, St. Paul never systematically reviews the events of our Lord's life. His references to them are all incidental.

(iv.) "The author of St. John's Gospel was well acquainted with all the Synoptic Gospels, and he omits all reference to this event. Can he have done so for any reason except that he did not believe it to be a fact?" The assertion that "the author of St. John's Gospel was well acquainted with all the Synoptic Gospels" is, I believe, amply supported, and without hesitation I accept it. But the relation of St. John's Gospel to the story of the Virgin Birth requires investigation. It is a most noteworthy characteristic of the fourth Gospel that it almost entirely keeps clear of the matter recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. Between the mention of John as baptizing and the Spirit descending as a dove upon our Lord (John i. 28, 31, 33) there is with one exception no narrative in any sense common to St. John and the Synoptists till we come to the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (John xii. 12 ff.) or possibly to the anointing at Bethany (xii. 1 ff.; Mark xiv. 3 ff., Matt. xxvi. 6 ff.). The one exception is the Feeding of the five thousand, with its sequel in the miracle on the sea; and the Feeding of the five thousand is introduced into the fourth Gospel because out of it there grows the discourse on the Bread from Heaven. Moreover, when the same great occasions (the evening of the betrayal, the betrayal,

the trial, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection) are being dealt with, the narrative of the fourth Gospel is markedly independent of the narrative in any of the Synoptists. Hence there seems to be no reason for thinking that St. John rejected the story of the Virgin Birth because he does not make any explicit reference to it. Moreover, St. John appears from time to time to correct the Synoptists, *e.g.*, as to the Judæan ministry of our Lord, the position in His ministry of the cleansing of the Temple, the day of the week on which the Crucifixion took place. It may therefore be reasonably urged that, if St. John had not believed the Virgin Birth to be a fact, he would have corrected, as he might easily have done, the error of two of the Synoptists on so important a matter. A statement of his own to the effect that Jesus was the son of Joseph, or a word put into the Lord's mouth, would have been sufficient. But in the fourth Gospel we find nothing of the kind.

But if St. John makes no explicit allusion to the story of the Lord's wonderful birth, is there anything in the language which he uses in the Gospel which shews that he assumes on the part of his readers a knowledge of this story as true? I ask attention to three points.

(1) We should naturally expect such language

in the earliest sentences of the Gospel. Do we find it? In *v. 11 ff.* the Evangelist writes thus:—

“ He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born [*or* begotten], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

In this last clause we must especially notice the words: “ nor of the will of man.” For it is clear that the English does not fully represent the Greek *οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρός*. The word *ἀνδρός*, of course, means not a human being but a man as distinguished from a woman. It should be translated “ a man,” or “ a husband ”; and we compare at once the words of Mary (Lk. i. 34): “ How shall this be, seeing I know not a man (*ἐπεὶ ἄνδρα οὐ γινώσκω*) ? ” The failure of the English to represent the Greek and our extreme familiarity with the passage combine to blind us to the extraordinary character of its thought and of its language.

Scholars will remember that certain textual authorities of the so-called “ Western ” type give the reading *ὅς . . . ἐγεννήθη*, so that the passage in these texts runs: “ Them that believe

on *his* name *who was* born [*or* begotten], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God." So read the passage was interpreted, and could only be interpreted, of the Virgin Birth of Christ. Zahn¹ accepts this reading as representing the original text of the Gospel. For myself, if for a moment I may speak of myself, some years ago I gave a long time to the study of the so-called "Western" text of the Gospels and of the Acts, and what I then learned of the "Western" text convinces me that as a whole it is derived from the text with which we are familiar, and not *vice versa*. But this "Western" reading, though in my judgment we cannot accept it as original, bears undesigned and vivid testimony to the significance of the ordinary reading. St. John affirms that those who believe on the name of Christ have not a natural but a divine generation. The spiritual generation of believers is analogous to the physical generation of Him on whom they believe. In both cases there is no intervention of any human will; in both cases the source of the generation is God. The phraseology of the passage is such that, if (as Canon Glazebrook and I believe) "the author of St. John's Gospel

¹ Both in his *Introduction to the N.T.*, E.T., pp. 266, 288, 310, and in his *Commentary on St. John*. See the Additional Note at the end of this volume.

was well acquainted with all the Synoptic Gospels," he must have deliberately meant to carry back the minds of his readers to the history which St. Matthew and St. Luke give of our Saviour's conception and birth apart from any human fatherhood. His words are indirect evidence of a very convincing kind that he accepted it.

(2) *Immediately* after this sentence the writer, coupling it with what follows by a simple "and," continues: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." In these words there is of course a complete absence of any hint that the Word came into the world through the ordinary process of human generation. However simple, the language is most unusual and most mysterious. Its unique character would be wholly intelligible, and was designed, as I believe, to be wholly intelligible, to those who in the preceding sentence had been compelled to remember the Lord's wonderful birth. Moreover, throughout the Gospel this kind of language is consistently used in reference to our Lord's advent into the world.¹ I claim the Prologue as a clear and strong witness that, if the writer knew the story of the Lord's birth in St. Matthew and St. Luke, he believed it to be true.

¹ Compare, *e.g.*, iii. 17, ix. 39, x. 36, xii. 46, xvi. 28, xvii. 18; contrast xvi. 21.

(3) Twice in this Gospel is our Lord called "son of Joseph." By using these or equivalent words himself, as I have already pointed out, or by putting them into the mouth of our Lord, the Evangelist could in a moment have shewn decisively that he rejected the story of the wonderful birth. But he conspicuously abstains from doing either of these things. The two passages to which I refer are as follows :—

i. 45 ff. : " Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of (ἀπό) Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of (ἐκ) Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. . . . Jesus answered and said unto him [Nathanael], Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

vi. 41 f. : " The Jews therefore murmured concerning him, because he said, I am the bread which came down out of heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How doth he now say, I am come down out of heaven? "

If the writer of the Gospel, as Canon Glazebrook and I alike believe, knew the birth-stories in St. Matthew and St. Luke, he must have been fully conscious that, when he wrote the words "the son of Joseph," he was setting down words of critical moment. He must have written them deliberately and with some special purpose in his mind. Did he then intend to signify by them that he rejected what was told by St. Matthew and St. Luke? We cannot suppose that he would have put that correction, a correction clearly of crucial importance, into the mouth of a man who had only just been "found" by Jesus and who had hardly yet begun to be a disciple; still less would he have put it into the mouth of the cavilling Jews. Indeed, the simple fact that he assigned the words "Jesus, the son of Joseph" to the Jews, who throughout his Gospel are represented as the enemies of all that was right and true in regard to our Lord, is to my mind a clear proof that he held that Jesus was *not* "the son of Joseph." But we must look a little closer into these two passages. What is their intention?

In all literature in which the dramatic element is developed, and in proportion as that element is developed, irony plays a part. The writer and the reader are in possession of facts of which the characters in the story are ignorant. These

characters, often at a crisis in the history, are represented as perplexed, when the key to their riddle lies in facts of which they are ignorant, but of which the writer and the readers are well aware; or as uttering some saying either in extraordinary harmony with, or in flagrant contradiction to, these facts. And the readers, as the author intends that they should do, admire or blame or pity and feel either the humour or the pathos or the horror of the situation. If the writer is a writer of fiction, these utterances of course are the creation of his art. We at once recall the earlier scenes of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles (see *e.g.* 132 ff., 216 ff.). On the other hand, if it is a true history, the author's skill is shewn either in selecting these particular sayings for record and bringing them out in clear relief or in moulding the language of the speakers. We now turn to the Gospel of St. John. Some critics regard the speeches in this Gospel as simply the invention of the writer. Others think that, however much the writer may have idealised a remembrance of words once spoken, yet behind the speeches there is some substratum of historical fact. For my present purpose it is unnecessary to decide between these two views. The point to which I desire to call attention is that in the fourth Gospel the dramatic element is

extraordinarily strong. If any one doubts this, let him read aloud, for example, the story of the man blind from his birth in chapter ix. And, in consonance with the strength of the dramatic element, irony has a conspicuous place in the book. I take two examples. (*a*) "On the last day, the great day of the feast," there arose a controversy among the multitude. "Some . . . said, This is of a truth the prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said that the Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" (vii. 37 ff.). The reader who knows the story of the birth at Bethlehem feels that, if the disputants had only known the simple facts so familiar to himself, what searchings of heart would they not have been spared. What a tragedy their ignorance was! (*b*) Once at the supreme crisis when the chief priests, as the official representatives of Israel, were rejecting Jesus, and when Caiaphas said: "It is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (xii. 50), St. John pauses, that, by commenting on it, he may emphasise the extraordinary irony of the high priest's words.

The two passages, then, in which the words

“ the son of Joseph ” are found, are, I submit, signal instances of this Johannine irony. On any other hypothesis they are flat and pointless. In the first of them (i. 45 ff.) the reader, who knows St. Luke’s account of the message of the angel and of the birth at Bethlehem, smiles at the contrast between the zeal of Philip for Jesus and his ignorance about Him. He feels a kindly pity when he hears Philip putting stumbling-blocks, which are Philip’s own inventions, in the way of his friend, and when he sees Nathanael’s perplexity: “ Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ? ¹ ” Further, in the sequel over against the call of Philip, pitched in so lowly a key, there is set the magnificence of Nathanael’s confession, when he has been brought to Jesus: “ Rabbi, thou art the son of God ; thou art the King of Israel.” The reader, who has already been reminded of St. Luke’s history (see above, p. 70), recalls the words of the angel (Lk. i. 32 ff.) : “ He shall be called the Son of the Most High : and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. . . . That which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God.” In the second of these two passages (vi. 42) the irony is not less forcible, but it lies much nearer

¹ The Greek (ἐκ) suggests that Nathanael regards Philip’s words as pointing to the birthplace of Jesus.

the surface of the narrative. The Jews, the consistent opponents of the Lord, claim to know all about the antecedents of Jesus. He is "the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know." For them these antecedents of His settle the question. His assertion about Himself, "I am come down out of heaven," is ridiculous. The son of Joseph come down out of heaven! And all the while the writer and the readers, who are familiar with the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, know the truth of which the Jews so ostentatiously assert their ignorance. It only remains for us to notice the place which these two passages have in the narrative of St. John. The first occurs when the last of the earliest group of disciples is being brought to Jesus before the ministry of the Lord has begun. The second is found in St. John's story of that crisis of decision which divides into two his history of the ministry. I am myself convinced on grounds of literary criticism alone that the writer of the fourth Gospel knew and accepted the story of the Lord's Virgin Birth.

(v.) But it will be remembered that Canon Glazebrook begins the passage, which we have just examined at length, with the words: "As to the Virgin Birth it is urged that the evidence is not such as to compel belief." I must frankly say

that any one who really takes up the position which the Canon here says is "urged" betrays complete ignorance of the nature of historical evidence, and of the grounds on which an educated Christian holds and repeats the Creed. Historical evidence cannot compel men to believe that any alleged event in the past actually took place. In historical studies verification by experiment and verification by demonstration are alike impossible. Historical evidence can only establish probability, however high in the scale that probability may rise. There is no event in the distant past the evidence for which is of so constraining a character that the denial of it would jeopardise a man's intellectual sanity. I venture to say that no one believes any one of the historical events stated as such in the Creed on the ground that the evidence for it "compels belief." Compulsory belief is not belief properly so called but knowledge. But if the alleged event belongs to the domain of religion, then, when historical investigation has done its work and has shewn approximately the degree of historical probability which the evidence justifies, that historical event becomes the material on which religious faith works. No one can prove past possibility of intellectual doubt that Jesus Christ once lived. But the evidence makes the probability that He did once live on earth so high

that it approaches as near as the nature of the case allows to absolute certainty. Then religious faith realises that the life of Jesus Christ on earth completely corresponds with faith in a living God who cares for His creatures, and that it satisfies the deepest instincts of man's nature; and so faith enables a man to say, "I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord." The case of the Lord's Virgin Birth is different. Here the evidence is slight. Ultimately the story, if true, must have rested on the word of the Lord's Mother. But to estimate the force of the admission just made we must ask the question—Can we, if we assume the truth of the history, conceive of the evidence being essentially different from what it is? We keep our birthdays; we veil all that concerns the first beginning of our physical life in reverent silence. It cannot have been otherwise in the Holy Family. The evidence then is slight, but in a case of this nature it could not be otherwise than slight. At this point religious faith claims to deal with the evidence. We are not indeed entitled to have any *a priori* ideas as to the way in which the Incarnation *must* have been brought about. We are not in a position to make any dogmatic assertion as to what was *necessary* in regard to an event so uniquely unique as the Incarnation. But from the very first, since the story became known to a few

and afterwards was embodied in the two Gospels, it has seemed to generations of Christian people congruous and reasonable, that Jesus, being what we believe Him to be, Incarnate Son of God and sinless man, should have been begotten "not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of a man, but of God." It may well be that the study of the phenomena connected with heredity will presently throw light on the problem of the entail of moral character through the father's and the mother's influence in the process of human generation, and that we shall be able hereafter to consider from a scientific point of view the relation between the Virgin conception and the sinlessness of our Lord. But quite apart from such speculations as to the light which future knowledge may throw upon this article of the Creed, the belief of the Church as to our Lord's conception and birth has in the past commended itself, and does to-day commend itself, to the reason and to the faith of myriads of thoughtful Christian people.

I add one word. I said a few lines above that the evidence is slight. It is important for us to observe that, as all evidence is not the same evidence, so all belief is not the same belief. As there are varying degrees of historical probability, so there are varying degrees of the sense of conviction and certitude. The evidence for the Virgin

Birth is not of the same cogency as that for the Resurrection. And therefore while, so far as I can read my own inmost thoughts, with a clear conscience before God and before men, I confess my belief that the Lord Jesus Christ "was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary" in the plain sense of those plain words, yet in this confession the assurance of faith (though it grows with study and thought) is not of the same degree as that with which I say, "The third day he rose again from the dead."

CHAPTER IV

THE RESURRECTION ON THE (THIRD DAY)

“THE third day he rose again from the dead.”

The pertinent passage in Canon Glazebrook's book is as follows (p. 23) :—

“That Jesus appeared to several of His disciples after His death is a fact for which there is an extraordinary amount of evidence. It is attested by St. Paul, who could quote his own experience as well as that of others, by all four evangelists, and by the central position which the resurrection took in the apostles' preaching from the very first. About the fact, then, there is no need for any discussion here. But about the mode of His appearance there is less certainty ; for St. Paul and the Evangelists appear to hold different views.”

There are two points of capital importance connected with this passage, the second of which will

bring us into the main stream of the investigation which opens before us.

(1) I call attention to the statement "That Jesus appeared to several of His disciples after His death is a fact . . . attested . . . by all four evangelists." The last words are quite clear and definite—"by all four evangelists." Now it is a commonplace among scholars to-day, about which there is practically unanimous agreement, that the passage [Mark] xvi. 9-20 is not part of the original Gospel of St. Mark, but is an appendix by a later hand. Thus the genuine Gospel of St. Mark, which is the basis of a great part of the narrative of St. Matthew and of St. Luke, to our great loss breaks off at the point at which the first part of the Resurrection story ends. The last words of St. Mark tell us that the women "fled from the tomb . . . and they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid." The genuine Gospel of St. Mark, therefore, is a witness to the empty tomb; for it records the words of the "young man": "He is risen; he is not here: behold, the place where they laid him!" But in the genuine Gospel of St. Mark there is not a word about any manifestation of the risen Lord to any one. There is only the promise: "He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you."

But we must turn to a later passage in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* (pp. 28 f.). There we read :—

“ The Judaising Christians, especially in Jerusalem, clung to the old materialistic view of the resurrection, and unconsciously moulded the tradition of our Lord’s resurrection into accordance with it. Comparing the simple narrative of St. Mark with those of the later Gospels, we can see that the additions all have the same tendency to translate the spiritual into the material. Legendary in their tone and inconsistent with each other, the additions were readily accepted in the uncritical age of which they were the natural growth. Men failed to perceive that these accretions obscured, if they did not destroy, the resemblance between our Lord’s resurrection and that of His disciples, so that He could not, without unreality, be called ‘ the firstfruits of them that slept.’ So, in spite of St. Paul’s teaching, the belief in a resurrection of the *flesh* soon became dominant in the Church, was embodied in the creeds, and remained almost unquestioned until modern times. . . .

[Those who follow the guidance of St. Paul] believe that the recorded ‘ appearances ’ were

actual events, not fictitious or imaginary: but they regard them, not as the presentment of flesh and blood to the bodily eye, but as the manifestation of a spiritual body to spiritual perception."

It appears to be plain that in this passage the writer at least includes the appearances of our Lord as supplying evidence as to the essential character of His Resurrection. As to the whole narrative he makes "the simple narrative of St. Mark" a standard by which he judges "the later Gospels," asserting that these latter make "additions" (the "tendency" of which is "to translate the spiritual into the material") to the simpler and earlier story. We have already seen, however, that the genuine St. Mark (unless we reject the almost universally accepted verdict of modern scholars) does not contain any account of any appearance of the risen Lord to any one. Either, therefore, the writer is in textual criticism a disciple of the late Dean Burgon (who maintained the authenticity of the last twelve verses of St. Mark), or, so far as the appearances of the risen Lord are concerned, the standard according to which he claims to judge the narratives of "the later Gospels" does not exist.

I shall presently deal with St. Paul's teaching. Here I only add that, so far as I know, there is not a shred of evidence for the assertion that "the Judaising Christians, especially in Jerusalem, clung to the old materialistic view of the resurrection, and unconsciously moulded the tradition of our Lord's resurrection in accordance with it." I am not aware of any indication that a view of the Lord's Resurrection was held in Gentile churches different from the view which was held in Jewish churches, or that the Judaising Christians had any opinion as to our Lord's Resurrection which was not shared by all other Christians. Certainly St. Luke, whose Gospel contains some of these so-called "additions," was not a Judaising Christian (Col. iv. 11, 14); and he was, moreover, a close friend and companion of St. Paul. The author of the fourth Gospel, which contains other so-called "additions," was, Canon Glazebrook tells us (p. 33), St. Paul's "great disciple."

(2) In the paragraph under consideration it will be remembered that the Canon writes thus: "About the fact [*i.e.* that Jesus appeared to several of His disciples after His death], then, there is no need for any discussion here. But, about the mode of His appearance there is less certainty." I wish to guard against the risk lest

the real question should be obscured. We should naturally infer from the Canon's words that no difference of opinion is involved except as to a relative "uncertainty about the mode of His appearance." It cannot be too definitely said that nothing less is at issue than the essential character of our Lord's Resurrection. The Creed asserts of our Lord that He "was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead." As the writer observes (p. 78 *n.*) these last words "were undoubtedly meant to express the 'resurrection of the flesh.'" But on the authority of St. Paul I at once add—the resurrection of the flesh "changed," "fashioned anew," into "a spiritual body" (see above, pp. 39 f.). On the other hand, unless I am completely mistaken, the Canon retains indeed the term "Resurrection," but he assigns to it a meaning quite different from that which it bears in the Creed, and in the speech and literature of ordinary Christian people. What then is the signification which in regard to our Lord the term "Resurrection" bears in this book?

It is much to be regretted that the Canon never clearly and explicitly puts into words what his view of the Lord's Resurrection is. In the book itself (p. 78; compare p. 70), and also in his letter to me, he refers us to chapter iii. for

the elucidation of his meaning. In that chapter (p. 24 ; compare p. 28) he lays down the principle as "inevitable," that "the mode of the resurrection is the same for Jesus and for all who rise after Him." What then is "the mode of the resurrection" for men? That question is answered when a description is given of the idea of the Resurrection to which, according to the Canon's view, St. Paul ultimately attained. "He [St. Paul] now pictures *the spiritual body* as coming down from heaven to clothe the soul *in the hour of death*. So that when the aged apostle looked beyond his approaching death, he saw himself *not as a disembodied spirit*, awaiting the last judgment in the gloom of Sheol, *but as clothed in his body of glory and passing at once into the presence of his Lord*" (p. 26). With this agrees a later passage (p. 35), in which the Canon "endeavours to present a faint outline of the faith which we inherit from St. Paul": "The resurrection and the 'day of judgment' are not collective but individual. *On the day of each man's death* the judgment, which began in his childhood, is completed; and a new condition is assigned to him, corresponding in some way with his earthly life. If the sentence be not 'death,' *the soul rises from earth in a spiritual body*." The italics in these two quotations are mine. What

the Canon says in these passages fills out what he said in his letter to me as to the "belief in the resurrection of 'a spiritual body'" in reference to our Lord (see above, p. 8). The view then as to our Lord's Resurrection which is set forth in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* includes the following propositions:—

(1) The Resurrection of our Lord consisted in the survival of His "soul" and its investiture with "a spiritual body."

(2) The Resurrection of our Lord was in time coincident with His death upon the Cross; and consequently to speak of "the third day" as the occasion of His Resurrection is untrue.

(3) There was no Resurrection of the "flesh" or "body" of our Lord.

(4) The story of the empty tomb, told in "the simple narrative of St. Mark" (p. 28), is untrue or irrelevant.

In the crucial passage in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* (p. 78), it will be remembered that the Canon uses the words: "The claim [*i.e.* that the words may be or ought to be interpreted symbolically] is being made in the case of two others—'Born of the Virgin Mary' and 'He rose again from the dead'." We note that in the latter clause the words "The third day" are omitted. Had the Canon quoted the clause as

it occurs in the Creed, I venture to say that his footnote—"Though the words by themselves could be interpreted otherwise, they were undoubtedly meant to express 'the resurrection of the flesh'"—would have been needless. When I referred to this "claim" in my letter of April 26 I restored the words "The third day," carefully, of course, abstaining from putting the whole sentence within inverted commas as though it were a verbal quotation from the Canon's book. It seemed to me that accuracy was here important. Had he noticed that I quoted the article of the Creed correctly, he would not have said in his letter to me that I "seriously misrepresented [his] position." The words of the Creed "The third day" affirm the truth of the story of the Resurrection contained in the four Gospels.

It will have been seen above how decisive a part St. Paul's teaching as to the Resurrection plays in the theory put forward by Canon Glazebrook. It is necessary therefore for me to examine the exegesis of St. Paul which we find in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*. I print in full the two relevant pages (pp. 25 f.).

"In the year 51, when he wrote to the Thessalonian¹ Church, he took for granted

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

the popular Jewish¹ belief in the resurrection as the reconstitution of the earthly body of flesh. In 56 or 57, writing to the Corinthians,² he described the new body as bearing the same sort of relation to the old as the corn plant does to the seed—manifestly different and yet akin. The second epistle³ to the Corinthians, written only a few months later, shews that his thought has reached another stage. ‘We know,’ he says, ‘that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.’ Then changing the metaphor, as his wont is, he speaks of the new garment with which the soul is to be clothed when the old one is worn out. Of course he did not intend either image to be taken literally; but the meaning which underlies both is the same, that the ‘spiritual body’ instead of being developed out of the natural body, is a gift from the celestial sphere. So far as we know, his faith remained in this form. The last utterance in which he touches upon the life to come is quite consistent with it. ‘I am in a strait,’ he writes to the

¹ Canon Glazebrook, in a footnote, refers to a Note at the end of this chapter of his book which gives information as to the ideas of the Jews about the Resurrection.

² 1 Cor. xv. 35-45.

³ 2 Cor. v. 1-4.

Philippians from his Roman prison, 'betwixt the two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.'¹

"Neglecting shades of difference, we find three clear stages in the apostle's advancing faith. He began with the common Jewish belief that after a few months or years of torpor in Sheol, the soul would be restored to its 'natural body' and share the reign of the Messiah on earth. Five years later, still hoping that the Advent was very near, he thought of the resurrection body much as did those early Christians on whose tombs in the catacombs we see the butterfly growing out of the chrysalis pictured as the type of the new life. A little later we see that the expectation of a speedy Advent, and with it the thought of Sheol, had passed away from his mind. He now pictures the spiritual body as coming down from heaven to clothe the soul in the hour of death. So that when the aged apostle looked beyond his approaching death, he saw himself not as a disembodied spirit, awaiting the last judgment in the gloom of Sheol, but as clothed in his body of glory and passing at once into the presence of his Lord."

¹ Phil. i. 23, 24.

We are told here that there are "three clear stages in the apostle's advancing faith." We will consider these stages in order.¹

(i.) The first alleged stage in St. Paul's faith finds expression in 1 Thess. iv. 15-17. Such is the Canon's reference. But it is better to take a longer passage into consideration—iv. 13-18. The passage is as follows :—

"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him (ὁ θεὸς τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἄξει σὺν αὐτῷ). For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

¹ In the discussion of St. Paul's teaching which follows I abstain from referring to the Pastoral Epistles, which bear the name of St. Paul. For the Canon (p. 58) assigns them to the group of "a few small writings of late date and uncertain authorship."

Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

In regard to the Canon's interpretation of this passage three points must be noted. But before I deal with these in detail I must ask attention to a general principle of great importance. The history of revelation is, at least to a very large extent, the history of the purification and the ennobling, through the teaching of the divine Spirit, of men's ideas about God and about the things of God. New conceptions of a higher type find expression. Old conceptions of a lower type disappear. The silence therefore of a prophet or of an apostle as to beliefs which were current among his contemporaries, or which had been held in the past, constitutes, no less than his utterances, the proper material of the history of revelation ; and this silence will be scrupulously noted by the faithful historian of religious thought. Such an historian will be careful not to ascribe to a religious teacher thoughts on which that teacher's contemporaries dwelt, or on which his predecessors dwelt, but which he himself does not expressly adopt. This rule is of special

importance if we are dealing with great epochs of revelation when advance is peculiarly rapid ; and among these epochs the time of Christ's coming has a pre-eminent place. With this preface I turn to the three points I just referred to.

(a) St. Paul three times in this passage uses the word " to fall asleep " (*κοιμᾶσθαι*) in reference to death. The Canon represents this expression by the paraphrase "torpor in Sheol." "He [St. Paul] began with the common Jewish belief that after a few months or years of torpor in Sheol, the soul would be restored to its 'natural body,' and share the reign of the Messiah on earth. Five years later,¹ etc." (p. 26). I do not think that this paraphrase will approve itself either to the judgment or to the taste of educated readers, or (what is far more important) that it reproduces St. Paul's thought. Christ's own Death and Resurrection, and the belief in His perpetual presence with those who are "in Him," revolutionised for those who believed in Him their conception of death. That revolution was already being accomplished when, within twenty-five years of his conversion, St. Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians. We point at once to St. Paul's words in this

¹ The reference in the words "five years later" is to I Corinthians.

passage: "them also that are fallen asleep in [*literally* through] Jesus will God bring with him." On the one hand, whatever the precise significance of the phrase "fallen asleep through Jesus" may be,¹ it certainly implies that the falling asleep of Christians is not apart from the presence and the care of Jesus. And on the other hand, the expression "God will bring with him" clearly indicates a belief on St. Paul's part that "the dead in Christ" (v. 16) have true fellowship with God in the time of waiting. It must be added that it is more than doubtful whether the phrase "torpor in Sheol" in any degree represents the thought of the Jews who were St. Paul's contemporaries.²

(b) Canon Glazebrook (p. 25) says that, when St. Paul wrote this Epistle to the Thessalonians, "he took for granted the popular Jewish belief in the resurrection as the reconstitution of the earthly body of flesh"; and again (p. 26), that St. Paul

¹ Compare v. 16 *οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν Χριστῷ* and 1 Cor. xv. 18 *οἱ κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ*. The order of the Greek words is against taking them to mean, as is grammatically possible, "Those who have fallen asleep shall God through Jesus bring with Him." See Lightfoot and Milligan *in loco*.

² See Charles, *Eschatology*, 2nd ed., p. 242: "From this time forward, when the departed are spoken of as 'asleep,' the term is to be regarded as a mere metaphor. The departed are henceforth conceived as possessing life and consciousness, as much as the living." The time indicated is the time at which were written "the oldest chapters of 1 Enoch" (p. 241), *i.e.* some time probably before 170 B.C. (p. 213).

"began with the common Jewish belief that, after a few months or years of torpor in Sheol, the soul would be restored to its 'natural body.' " The fact is that in this passage St. Paul does not say one single word about the Resurrection body. The ascription to him of a belief "in the resurrection as the reconstitution of the earthly body of flesh" is absolutely without justification of any kind.¹ It must be added that we know that, when some five years later he spoke explicitly on the matter, he held a very different view (1 Cor. xv. 42-53).

(c) The Canon (to continue the last quotation) writes: ". . . the soul would be restored to its 'natural body,' and share the reign of the Messiah on earth." About "the reign of the Messiah on earth" St. Paul in this passage does not say one single word. The ascription to him of this belief also is absolutely without justification of any kind.

It need hardly be said that in this Epistle St. Paul alludes to the Resurrection with the

¹ It is well to notice 1 Thess. v. 23, to which the Canon does not allude: "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved (τηρηθῇ) entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is clear that the reference is to moral "preservation" (note "sanctify" and "without blame"); compare iv. 1-8. But even if we give a wider sense to the phrase τὸ σῶμα . . . τηρηθῇ, such "preservation" would not exclude a "re-fashioning." In the Resurrection the body will be "preserved" *because* it will be "changed."

one object of dispelling the anxiety which the Christians at Thessalonica felt in regard to those of their brethren who died before the return of Christ, which they expected shortly. He reassures them by declaring that at the coming of the Lord in glory from heaven "the dead in Christ" shall rise "first" and that then all, the living and those just risen, shall be reunited in the perpetual presence of the Lord.¹

(ii.) The second alleged stage in St. Paul's faith finds expression in 1 Corinthians xv. I shall presently have to call attention on the positive side to certain important points in this chapter. The Canon, however, gives but little space to its consideration; but in what he says there are certain important points to which I must advert.

(a) I do not think that there is the smallest reason for supposing that, when St. Paul wrote the first Epistle to the Corinthians, he had reached a stage of faith different from that which he had reached when he wrote the first Epistle to the Thessalonians. The language of 1 Cor. xv. has points of resemblance to the language of 1 Thess.

¹ Compare 2 Thess. ii. 1: "The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him" (τῆς . . . ἡμῶν ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ' αὐτόν).

iv. 13 ff.¹ And, when we confine ourselves to what St. Paul actually wrote,² there is no difference whatever between the earlier and the later passage as regards essential ideas. The first passage is little more than an allusion to the Resurrection introduced for a special purpose. The second passage is a statement or, to use the word which I think that St. Paul himself would probably have used, a prophecy, full and deliberate.

(b) The Canon writes thus (p. 25): "In 56 or 57, writing to the Corinthians, he described the new body as bearing the same sort of relation to the old as the corn plant does to the seed—manifestly different and yet akin." It is clear that these last words precisely neglect the point of St. Paul's comparison. It might be said that, *e.g.*, an ear of wheat and an ear of barley are "manifestly different and yet akin." Kin-

¹ 1 Thessalonians iv. 13 ff.
The metaphor of "sleep"
(κοιμᾶσθαι) in vv. 13, 14
(them that are fallen asleep
through Jesus), 15

v. 15. the coming (παρουσία)
of the Lord.

v. 15. we that are alive.

v. 16. with the trump of God.

1 Corinthians xv.

vv. 6, 18 (they which are
fallen asleep in Christ), 20.

v. 23. his [Christ's] coming
(παρουσία).

v. 51. we shall not all sleep.

v. 52. at the last trump: for
the trumpet shall sound.

² See above, p. 96. Compare *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, p. 33, "the belief in the re-constitution of the earthly body which St. Paul had renounced when he wrote to the Corinthians."

ship does not touch what is essential in St. Paul's analogy. What St. Paul, without controversy, emphasises is, that the developed plant is " manifestly different " from the seed and yet *has its origin in the seed*. We cannot understand the meaning of St. Paul's analogy if we are blind to the *tertium comparationis*. It is, however, only fair to say that, though the writer robs St. Paul's parable of its meaning, yet on the next page he adduces another analogy which represents at least in part St. Paul's idea—" He [St. Paul] thought of the resurrection body much as did those early Christians on whose tombs in the catacombs we see the butterfly growing out of the chrysalis pictured as the type of the new life."

(c) St. Paul describes the risen Christ as " the first-fruits of them that have fallen asleep " (vv. 20, 23). Without doubt the metaphor of the first-fruits implies that in all things essential the future Resurrection will be after the pattern of Christ's Resurrection. But the Canon's proposition (p. 24) that " the belief assumed by the word ' first-fruits ' " is " that the mode of the resurrection is the same for Jesus and for all who rise after Him " is very wide, and the words " the mode of the resurrection " are quite undefined. I submit that in respect to two con-

siderations this proposition must be limited. On the one hand, the metaphor itself suggests that the circumstances in which the first-fruits are gathered and brought in differ widely from those under which the harvest is gathered and brought in. The resurrection of one man, a resurrection brought about by God in an unrenewed world, cannot in all points be like the resurrection of the many wrought out in a world which is itself being renewed and recreated. On the other hand, our Lord's Resurrection was essentially a revelation to men, a revelation which must have appealed to them in ways which they could understand. The future Resurrection will not in this sense be a revelation to men. Regarding the question from these two points of view, we should expect to find that in our Lord's Resurrection there were elements which will not be and cannot be reproduced in the future Resurrection. What those elements may be we have not powers which enable us to define. But it is certain that we have need of caution when we draw inferences from the metaphor. Again, it cannot escape notice that in this whole question of the Resurrection the Canon reverses what I think that I may call the universal and natural method, according to which St. Paul regarded, and Christian men have regarded, Christ's Resurrection as a

revelation and have found in it not only an assurance of their own Resurrection but also a clue to its character. The Canon, on the other hand, draws an imaginary picture of the events of the harvest (if the word harvest is applicable to a series of resurrections coincident in each case with the hour of death) and from that imaginary picture infers what has taken place as to "the first-fruits." If this mode of argument is legitimate, the belief in the Resurrection, alike the Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of "the dead in Christ," becomes dependent on the shifting fancy of individuals. Lastly, the Canon argues from St. Paul's axiom that Christ is "the first-fruits"; but by reversing St. Paul's method he arrives at a doctrine of the Resurrection which differs *toto caelo* from that of St. Paul. This procedure, except on an hypothesis which seems to me impossible, ends in abolishing the axiom from which it professes to start. For in what does Christ's Resurrection consist according to the view put forward by this writer? It consists in two things: (i.) in the ascent of His soul clothed with a spiritual body in the hour of His death; (ii.) in the visions of Him granted to His followers. Christ cannot be "the first-fruits" in regard to the second of these elements in this "Resurrection"; for those

who have died since He died have not normally appeared after death to their friends. Christ, therefore, must be "the first-fruits" in regard to the former of these elements in this "Resurrection." What does this involve? It involves, so far as I can see, the belief that all those who have died since the moment of their Saviour's death have at their death received this "spiritual body," and that all those who died before the moment of His death did not receive, and never will receive, this "spiritual body." In other words, we seem to be asked to believe that at one particular moment in the history of the world the actual character of death was changed. For, if there was no change and if those who died before Christ died received this "spiritual body," Christ's priority as "the first-fruits" is done away.

(iii.) The third and last alleged stage in St. Paul's faith finds expression in 2 Corinthians v. 1-9. The Canon, it will be noted, directs attention only to vv. 1-4. It will be more satisfactory to take into our view a somewhat longer passage (vv. 1-9). It is as follows:—

"For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with

hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon (*ἐπενδύσασθαι*) with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed (*ἐνδυσάμενοι*) we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed (*ἐκδύσασθαι*), but that we would be clothed upon (*ἐπενδύσασθαι*) that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him."

I have transcribed the passage as it stands in the Revised Version. That version, however, is seriously misleading. In particular it translates the double compound *ἐπενδύσασθαι* by the words "clothed upon"—a translation which entirely fails to suggest to the English reader

what the Apostle's meaning is. The difficulty in rendering the passage into English lies chiefly in the fact that the Greek word in question has a kind of technical meaning—"to put on an upper garment over an under garment"¹; and a translation which brings out the meaning is apt to be cumbrous and awkward. I will make an endeavour to represent the first four verses more exactly than the R.V. does.

"For we know that, if the earthly house of our bodily frame² [*or* tabernacle] be pulled down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands,³ eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to put on over it our habitation which is from heaven; if so be that having put it on we shall not

¹ The corresponding substantive occurs in John xxi. 7: "When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him (τὸν ἐπενδύτην διεζώσατο), for he was naked." "Naked" here means having on only his tunic or vest (χιτῶν), like "nudus" in Vergil's "nudus ara, sere nudus"; compare "stripped" in modern athletic language. On the top of his tunic or vest St. Peter now put on his upper garment (τὸν ἐπενδύτην).

² "The depreciatory term σκῆνος for the human body is borrowed from the Pythagorean philosophy" (F. Field, *Notes on the Translation of the N.T.*, p. 183); see also Wetstein *in loc.*

³ St. Paul seems to derive his language from a saying ascribed to Christ. See Mark xiv. 58: "We heard him say, I will *pull down* this sanctuary *made with hands*, and in three days I will *build* another *not made with hands*." Compare xv. 29; John ii. 19.

be found naked. For verily we that are in this bodily frame [*or* tabernacle] do groan, being burdened, because we do not wish to put it off, but to put on over it the upper garment, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life."

The consideration of this passage is the turning point in this present study of St. Paul's teaching as to the Resurrection. Canon Glazebrook writes of it thus :—

"A little later [than the date of 1 Corinthians] we see that the expectation of a speedy Advent, and with it the thought of Sheol, had passed away from his mind. He now pictures the spiritual body as coming down from heaven to clothe the soul in the hour of death. So that when the aged apostle looked beyond his approaching death, he saw himself not as a disembodied spirit, awaiting the last judgment in the gloom of Sheol, but as clothed in his body of glory and passing at once into the presence of his Lord " (p. 26). And again, after quoting the opening verse about the earthly house being "dissolved," he continues (p. 25) : "Then changing the metaphor, as his wont is, he speaks of the new garment

with which the soul is to be clothed when the old one is worn out."

According to the view taken in this passage, during the few months which elapsed between the First and the Second Epistle to Corinth St. Paul fundamentally changed his belief as to the Resurrection of men and (since the Resurrection of men must essentially be after the manner of Christ's Resurrection) his belief also as to Christ's Resurrection. The Resurrection of Christ St. Paul now regarded as synchronising with His death, and the Lord's body is not concerned in His Resurrection at all. His Resurrection consisted in "the spiritual body coming down from heaven to clothe the soul in the hour of death." Obviously this was a revolution in St. Paul's Gospel. Let us see what this revolution involves.

Three years after his conversion, that is, from five to eight years after the Resurrection itself, St. Paul went up to Jerusalem with the express purpose of "visiting Cephas." There he spent a fortnight in company with Cephas and James, the Lord's brother (Gal. i. 19). Now Cephas and James are the only two individuals whom he mentions by name (1 Cor. xv. 5, 7) among the many who had seen the risen Lord. There is therefore an undesigned coincidence between St.

Paul's statement in his letter to the Galatians and his statement in his letter to the Corinthians. Clearly these two Apostles had a unique place in St. Paul's thoughts about the Resurrection. To them he owed a peculiar debt for what he had learned from them about it. Moreover, fourteen years later, on the occasion of another visit to Jerusalem, St. Paul tells us that he won the friendship and confidence of St. John also (Gal. ii. 1, 9). These three primary witnesses to the Resurrection of the Lord, therefore, the Apostle himself assures us that he knew in the intimacy of apostolic fellowship. From them he must have learned the facts about the Resurrection itself, and about the subsequent appearances of the risen Lord. Through St. Paul we are brought into immediate contact with these three. His witness is their witness, and their witness is his. For this statement we have St. Paul's own authority. For he expressly declares to the Corinthians that he "delivered" unto them "that which also [he] received" (1 Cor. xv. 3); and again later on in the paragraph (*v.* 11) he returns to the same subject and renews his emphatic assertion that his message as to the Resurrection was identical with that of those who were Apostles before him—"Whether it be I or they, so we preach and so ye believed." The last three words—"so ye believed"—remind us that

the Apostle leaves his converts under no possibility of doubt as to the vital importance which he himself attached to this gospel of Christ's Death and of Christ's Resurrection. In it they "stood"; by it they were "saved." His great desire for them was that they should "hold it fast" (v. 2).

During all the years then of his ministry, up to the time when he despatched the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the Resurrection was the essential theme of St. Paul's teaching; he regarded it as the centre of his doctrine and of his life. There is not a hint in his letters or in the Acts that hitherto he had in any way wavered in his belief as to the facts or as to the doctrine of our Lord's Resurrection. But during the months which intervened between his writing the first Epistle to Corinth and his writing the second, we are told in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* that he completely changed his belief. For indeed it cannot be maintained that this alleged change was concerned with some trivial point of detail. St. Paul wrote in the first Epistle these words (1 Cor. xv. 3 ff.) :—

"I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on

the third day according to the scriptures ; and that he appeared to Cephas."

Six months later, when he wrote the second Epistle, this fundamental passage, if the theory under consideration is true, ought to have been rewritten thus :—

" I deliver not unto you now that which I received ; and that which I received not do I now deliver unto you, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ; and that ' the spiritual body came down from heaven to clothe his soul in the hour of death ' ; and that he was buried ; and that he appeared to Cephas."

At this point I recall the following passage in this same second Epistle to Corinth (2 Cor. i. 17 ff.) :—

" When I therefore was thus minded, did I shew fickleness ? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the yea yea and the nay nay ? But as God is faithful, our word toward you is not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus

and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea."

In this passage St. Paul vehemently repudiates the charge of fickleness in regard to his plan of a journey to Macedonia and his purpose of paying the Corinthians two visits. With what vehemence would he have repudiated the charge of fickleness not as to his journeys but as to his teaching, and that on a matter which he had already himself asserted to be fundamental (1 Cor. xv. 1 ff.)—his teaching as to the Resurrection of Christ and as to the Resurrection of Christians? If the Apostle had been conscious that he had been fickle as to that which was so great, could he with consistency and decency have treated with indignation the assertion of some of the Corinthians that he had been fickle in that which was so little? Moreover with the most solemn form of asseveration—"As God is faithful"—the Apostle appeals to his constancy in the matter of his message—"our word toward you is not yea and nay"; and he pleads his constancy in the matter of his message as the pledge of his constancy in the matter of his plans. Is it conceivable that he would have made this appeal, if he had been conscious that within the last six months he had changed his mind as to his central doctrine, and as to the fact which was the

basis of his central doctrine ? And once more, if St. Paul had so altered his convictions as to the Resurrection, would he not have said so in words simple, clear, unmistakable ? Of all Christian teachers and of all Christian men none has ever been so insistent as St. Paul as to his own sincerity and outspokenness. " I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable . . . I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God " (Acts xx. 20, 27) ; " Touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not " (Gal. i. 20) ; " I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Ghost " (Rom. ix. 1) ; " But as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ " (2 Cor. ii. 17). I venture to say that, if St. Paul had changed his witness as to the Resurrection in the way alleged in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, he would have ceased to be an Apostle ; and that, if he had not said so in words so plain that no one could doubt his meaning, he would have ceased to be an honest man.

But it is time to ask the question, On what grounds is this allegation of St. Paul's change of belief based ? What are the reasons on the strength of which it is maintained that St. Paul thus fundamentally modified his teaching ? Canon Glazebrook obtains the interpretation which he

puts forward by pressing a single sentence, significant details in which he overlooks, and by neglecting, except for one comment which I venture to say is incorrect, the whole of the succeeding context. The sentence on which he relies is the one verse which he quotes in its entirety (*v. 1*: "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens"). I think that I am accurate in saying that the meaning assigned by him to this verse is this: "When our body dies, we shall come into possession of a spiritual body." But two points are to be carefully noted. (1) St. Paul does not use the future tense—"we shall have" or "we shall acquire" or "we shall put on." He uses the present tense—"we have." "The house not made with hands" is a present possession here and now while he is in the body. It is "laid up for us in heaven."¹ But the time of the actual appropriation of it, though this cannot be doubtful, is here left undefined. (2) St. Paul does not say "*When* the earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved," but "*if* it be dissolved." And the Greek equivalent for "if" here used (*ἐάν*) implies a doubt whether it will or whether it will not be dissolved.

¹ Col. i. 5; compare 2 Tim. iv. 8, 1 Peter i. 4 f.

The meaning of this verse, even when we regard it by itself, is, I believe, clear.¹ It is this: "*Should* it be so that our body dies, yet even so we possess, and shall still possess, a spiritual body laid up in heaven." But the meaning becomes clearer if we view the verse, as it is our duty to do, in the light of the succeeding context. Of this context all that the Canon says (after quoting *v.* 1) is this (p. 25): "Then changing the metaphor, as his wont is, he speaks of the new garment with which the soul is to be clothed *when the old one is worn out.*" The idea expressed by the words which I have printed in italics has no place in the passage itself; it belongs to the Canon, not to St. Paul.² It is, as will appear, an alien intrusion. But while the Canon introduces into his interpretation of St. Paul's words a thought which is not St. Paul's, so he also ignores thoughts to which St. Paul gives clear expression, and the recognition of which is essential to our understanding his meaning. These thoughts are four in number: (1) There is the description of St. Paul's distress as he looks forward to the dimly-known future. He is pos-

¹ Who are the "we" in *iv.* 16 ff.? The antithesis between "we" and "you" in *vv.* 12-15 shews that it is not "we believers" but "we who write to you," *i.e.* St. Paul with Timothy in the background.

² For similar cases in which ideas are attributed to St. Paul which are not his, see p. 96.

sessed by a very human misgiving—"In this we groan,¹ longing to put on as an upper garment . . ." (v. 2); "We that are in this bodily frame do groan, being burdened" (v. 4). (2) This distress is caused by St. Paul's dread of putting off the garment which he now wears (v. 4), and of there being nothing to take its place—the dread of "nakedness" ² (v. 3 f.). In plain words, his dread is lest he, to his fingers' tips a living feeling man, should have to divest himself of his body, and should thus have to become an incorporeal spirit. (3) There is the metaphor, which is the key to the whole passage, of putting on the new garment (spoken of in v. 1 as "a house not made with hands") as *an upper garment on the top of the old* (vv. 2, 4), that is, the new spiritual body on the top of the present natural body. (4) There is St. Paul's final contentment with the possibility of his being "absent from the body" (ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, v. 8), that is, with the possibility of his entering into that very state of incorporeal

¹ The utter longing wrings "groans" from the Apostle; compare Rom. viii. 23, where the intensity of the expectation of adoption in contrast to present sorrows is the cause of his "groaning."

² The word γυμνός (naked) is used in Greek of the disembodied soul from Plato's time onwards: compare, e.g., Plato, *Cratylus*, 403 B, ἡ ψυχὴ γυμνὴ τοῦ σώματος ("the soul naked and stripped of the body"). See Wetstein *in loc.* for later instances.

existence, the thought of which had been so terrible to him. For it will be noticed that in *v. 8* the metaphor of the homelessness of one separated from his own familiar dwelling takes the place of the metaphor of "nakedness" which St. Paul used earlier in the passage (*v. 3*). It must be observed that all these essential elements in the passage are absolutely inexplicable, if St. Paul believed that "the spiritual body would come down from heaven to clothe the soul *in the hour of death*."

We are now in a position to review the whole passage. Its difficulty lies in the fact that here, as indeed throughout this letter, St. Paul is deeply moved. He writes under the influence of strong emotions. His thought therefore lacks the precision and the logical orderliness which would be maintained by a man who calmly sat down to make a plain unimpassioned statement of his views on a given subject. His language also, charged with deep personal feeling, takes the form of a series of metaphors which rapidly pass one into the other. St. Paul's meaning is, I venture to say, unmistakable. But to comprehend it we must by an effort of sympathy make ourselves participators of the hopes and the fears of which his mind was the battle-field. Before we go further we must remind ourselves

that at this time St. Paul and his contemporaries thought that the Lord Jesus would soon return, it might well be in their own lifetime. Six months before St. Paul had plainly stated this—"We shall not all sleep" (1 Cor. xv. 51); and there is nothing in this passage or in the rest of the Epistle even to hint that he had changed his view. Now we have already seen what was the motive of St. Paul's reference to the Return and the Resurrection in his earliest extant Epistle. He wished to reassure the Thessalonians, some of whom feared that their friends in Christ who died before the *Parousia* would not share, or would not fully share, in the blessings of the Resurrection. St. Paul dispelled their doubts. But he had his own personal burden of perplexity to bear, not wholly dissimilar to theirs. What if he himself should pass away and his natural body die before the Return of Christ? He at once allays whatever fear oppresses him by the assurance that even now he possesses an eternal habitation. It is laid up for him in heaven ready to be revealed and to be appropriated by him when God shall please; and the appointed time of its appropriation would be (so he had told the Corinthians a few months ago) when the Lord returned. Of his heirship to that heavenly habitation, that spiritual body, death would not

deprive him. But a second cause of dread weighs him down. He is sure that in the end all will be well ; in the end he will attain to his "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul." But what of the intervening time when his natural body has died and when, the Lord not having yet returned, he is without that heavenly habitation, that spiritual body ? How intensely he longs not to die before the Lord's Return. For, if he is living in the body then, he will put on the heavenly habitation, the new and spiritual body, as an upper garment, over the natural earthly body ; and he assumes—there is no need to argue this—that if he does so put on the new spiritual body, he "will not be found naked." Then that dreaded sense of exposure and unprotectedness will not be his lot ; then all that is mortal, the earthly natural body, will be taken up into, absorbed by, the spiritual body which he will have put on over it as an upper garment ; then "what is mortal will be swallowed up of life." Well, but (he continues, tracing all to its source) the divine Artificer who, for the very end of the great renewal, has spent His labour upon us is God ; and God has already given to us the Holy Spirit, of whom now our natural body is the temple (1 Cor. vi. 19), as a pledge of the final manifestation of the Spirit,

who will then be the means of our "perfect consummation." It is this thought of the regenerating Spirit, his already in a measure, which at last overcomes St. Paul's shrinking from the unknown future, though the very dislocation of the sentence (*vv.* 6-8) reveals the Apostle's struggle against his natural fearfulness. At length he can say that he is of good courage, nay, that he is gladly content, to migrate from the earthly natural body, even though this migration implies a sense of homelessness, that very "nakedness" from which he but just now instinctively shrank; for this migration from the familiar body is the one condition of his reaching his true home in the presence of the Lord.

One point in connexion with the Canon's treatment of this passage I have hitherto passed over. I allude to the following words (*p.* 25) :—

"Of course he did not intend either image to be taken literally; but the meaning which underlies both is the same, that the 'spiritual body,' instead of being developed out of the natural body, is a gift from the celestial sphere."

He implies that in 1 Corinthians St. Paul taught that the "spiritual body" will be developed out of the natural body, that in 2 Corinthians the

“spiritual body” is a gift; and that this is one of the points in regard to which in the later Epistle St. Paul’s “thought had reached another stage.” Let us then turn to the earlier of the two Epistles. The Canon is correct in saying that in that earlier letter the Apostle regarded the “spiritual body” as being developed out of the natural body. But he has forgotten that in that same Epistle St. Paul puts forward the other view also. It will be admitted that the parable of the seed dominates the whole of St. Paul’s treatment of the subject (*e.g.* vv. 42 ff.). Now of the seed St. Paul writes (v. 38): “But God giveth it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own.” In this whole passage, then, in which the Apostle speaks of the subject more fully than he does elsewhere, he gives expression to these *two* views of the origin of the “spiritual body”—two views which are not contradictory but complementary. The “spiritual body” is a growth. The “spiritual body” is a gift. And further, in some later verses (vv. 47 ff.) he also implies clearly that it is “heavenly.” We are by no means unfamiliar with the idea that there may be a synthesis of two such apparently divergent statements, and that such a synthesis constitutes a larger comprehensive truth. We recall at once St. Paul’s words to the Philippians

(ii. 12 f.): "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." Many also will remember the old controversy between creatianism and traducianism, and will agree that both theories contain a truth, but that neither contains the whole truth; they must be fused. There is an analogy between these two theories of the origin of the soul and the two views of the origin of the "spiritual body," both of which St. Paul asserts.

I submit, then, that a full consideration of St. Paul's language shews that the theory that the Apostle changed his conception of the Resurrection in the six months which elapsed between the composition of the two Epistles to Corinth is absolutely baseless. The later Epistle assumes and confirms the teaching of the earlier.¹

But, as we saw above in another case, it is a

¹ There are points of contact between the language of the two passages.

1 Corinthians xv.

The metaphor of putting on a garment:

vv. 53 f. put on (*ἐνδύσασθαι*) incorruption: put on immortality.

v. 53 f. this mortal (*τὸ θνητόν*).

v. 54. swallowed up (*κατεπόθη*).

2 Corinthians v.

The metaphor of putting on a garment:

vv. 2, 3, 4. put on over (*i.e.* an upper garment); having put on; put off; put on over (*ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἐνδύσασθαι, ἐκδύσασθαι*).

v. 4. what is mortal (*τὸ θνητόν*).

v. 4. (*ὅσα καταποθῇ*).

wise rule, when we are seeking to understand the meaning of an author in a particular passage, to enquire whether there is any other passage in his writings, contemporary or nearly contemporary, dealing with the same subject; and if so, to compare what he has said in the different places, and to confirm or to correct, as the case may be, our interpretation of the passage from which we started. The Canon has not done this in regard to this passage. I venture to do my best to supply his lack of service.

The Epistle to the Romans belongs to the same group of St. Paul's Epistles as the two letters to Corinth. On what seem to me to be good grounds it is generally regarded as having been written a little later than the second Epistle to Corinth. It is obvious therefore that what St. Paul says in it about the Resurrection will prove a most effectual test wherewith to try any interpretation of his words in 2 Corinthians. There are three such passages in the Roman Epistle. I will notice each of them as briefly as possible.

(i.) Romans vi. 3 f. :

“ Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with

him through baptism into death ; that like as Christ was raised from the dead (ἡγέρθη Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν) through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life."

Compare Col. ii. 12 : " Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead (τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν)." Here St. Paul describes Baptism as including for the baptized spiritual realities which correspond to the Lord's death and burial (compare 1 Cor. xv. 3 f., Acts xiii. 29 f.), and, on the other hand, to His Resurrection. Resurrection is regarded as correlative to death and burial and as the reversal of burial. This language of St. Paul's would have been impossible if he had regarded Christ's so-called Resurrection as synchronising with His death.

(ii.) Romans viii. 11 :

" But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead (ὁ ἐγείρας ἐκ νεκρῶν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν) shall quicken also your mortal bodies through (*or, according to another reading, because of*) his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

It is of extreme importance that here we should observe, if we desire to learn what was St. Paul's belief as to the Resurrection, that he asserts that "the *bodies*" of those whom he addresses will at the Resurrection be the subjects of the quickening act of God (compare 1 Cor. xv. 22, 36). It is not St. Paul's view that at death the natural body is for ever laid aside and that a new spiritual body is then conferred upon the spirit. He holds that the "mortal bodies" of men will be "quickenened." But why does St. Paul use the phrase "your mortal bodies" and not the phrase "your dead bodies"? The latter phrase, even if St. Paul had wished to use it, would have been almost impossible in this context. For in the previous verse St. Paul had said in a figurative or moral sense "the body is dead because of sin." In the very next sentence to have used the phrase "your dead bodies" in the natural sense would have been intolerably confusing to his readers. But there is a clear reason why St. Paul cannot have *wished* to use the phrase "your dead bodies." It would not have expressed his thought in the fulness of its application; for it would have excluded from this divine quickening all those who should be alive at the Lord's Return—"We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). The fact is that St. Paul uses

here the epithet "mortal" of the bodies of his friends not in relation to the time of the Lord's return but quite simply and naturally in relation to the actual time when he wrote the words—"Your bodies now at this moment mortal."¹ That this quickening of the body cannot be placed in the hour of death is obvious; for the body is not then "quickened." Further, the close parallel between Christ's Resurrection and the Resurrection of Christians necessarily involved in the passage makes it imperative for us to conclude that in St. Paul's belief Christ's *body* was the object of God's quickening activity.

(iii.) Romans viii. 19-23 :

"The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for (*ἀπεκδέχεται*) the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have

¹ Compare 2 Cor. iv. 11 : "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for (*ἀπεκδεχόμενοι*) our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

For my present purpose the last words are the important words—"the redemption of our body." The word "redemption" implies a bondage from which that which is redeemed is delivered. What that bondage is in this case appears from the context—"The creation itself," of which the body is part, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." It is this bondage of corruption therefore from which the body will be "redeemed." From the passage two points emerge on which special stress must be laid. (1) In St. Paul's view the body will not finally be laid aside as of no account. The body will be emancipated from corruption. Hence this passage is very closely parallel to 1 Cor. xv. 42, 53—"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption . . . this corruptible must put on incorruption." (2) In St. Paul's view this deliverance of the body from corruption will take place not at the hour of the death of individuals (which indeed is contrary to plain facts) but at the time of "the revealing of the sons of God" (v. 19, with which verse the use of the Greek word for "wait for" closely

connects our present verse), at the time when "creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption."

These three passages which we have just examined tell their own tale clearly and strongly. There is no mistaking what the Apostle says in them. They occur in a letter which was almost certainly written subsequently to the second letter to Corinth. They forbid us to place on chapter v. of that letter the interpretation given in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* which, as we have seen, is founded on the misunderstanding of a single verse divorced from its context.

But from the task of supplementing the deficiencies of this volume it is necessary for us to return to the distasteful task of criticising it. When its author has quoted the first verse of 2 Corinthians v. and given that interpretation of the passage as a whole, which we have already considered, he continues thus (pp. 25 f.) :—

"So far as we know, his faith remained in this form. The last utterance in which he touches upon the life to come is quite consistent with it. 'I am in a strait,' he writes to the Philippians [i. 23 f.] from his Roman prison, 'betwixt the two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better :

nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.' "

When I read this passage I confess that I could hardly believe the testimony of my eyes. For there are two passages in this same Epistle to the Philippians in which St. Paul " touches upon the life to come " and which are entirely inconsistent with " his faith " as it is set forth in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*. One of them is among the most familiar passages in all St. Paul's writings and is embodied in the committal sentences of the English Burial Office. They are these :—

(i.) Philippians iii. 10 f. :

" That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death ; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead."

The original Greek of the last words of this passage is—*εἴ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν*. They may be literally represented by the following English words: " If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection, even the resurrection from among the dead." Whatever the precise reference of these words may

be, it is luminously clear that, when he wrote them, St. Paul looked forward to being numbered among the dead and to being afterwards raised from among the dead. It is impossible that he should have spoken thus if he had believed that his so-called Resurrection would take place in the hour of his death.

(ii.) Philippians iii. 20 f. :

“ Our citizenship is in heaven ; from whence also we wait (ἀπεκδεχόμεθα) for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ : who shall fashion anew (μετασχηματίσει) the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed (σύμμορφον) to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.”

This passage recapitulates St. Paul's teaching in earlier passages as to the Resurrection. It is, I believe, the latest passage in his writings in which he speaks in any detail of this subject. It supplies decisive proof that from first to last the Apostle was consistent in his belief about the Resurrection. The points to which I direct attention are these : (1) St. Paul believed that “ the body of our humiliation ”—“ humiliation ” in earthly life (compare *e.g.* 2 Cor. iv. 7 ff., xii.

7 ff.) and in death (compare 1 Cor. xv. 42 ff.)—will itself be subject to a “fashioning anew.” (2) St. Paul believed that the issue of that “fashioning anew” will be the conformity of our body to the Lord’s “body of glory.” (3) St. Paul believed that this “fashioning anew” will take place when the Lord Jesus Christ shall come from heaven and that He Himself will effect it.

I fully realise the extreme gravity of the criticism which it has been my duty to make. In this book we have found many things which astonish us; but in it nothing is more painfully surprising than that a writer, who claims to have so intimate an insight into St. Paul’s writings that he is able to shew that within six months the Apostle wholly changed his belief as to the Resurrection, commits himself to a statement which asserts that the passages we have just considered do not exist.

It will now be well that I should endeavour to give a connected view of St. Paul’s teaching about the Resurrection, the Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of “the dead in Christ.” We have already had occasion from time to time to notice that there are links of language connecting together the chief passages

of St. Paul which deal with this subject.¹ These links of language are an outward sign of a unity of thought. I believe that, if (as we are bound to do) we keep ourselves to what St. Paul wrote and abstain from ascribing to him ideas derived from other sources, there does not exist a particle of evidence to shew that St. Paul in the slightest degree changed his position in regard to the four fundamental beliefs which dominate his doctrine of the Resurrection. These four fundamental

¹ Later Epistles.

Rom. viii. 11. shall quicken
(ζωοποιήσει) your mortal
bodies.

Rom. viii. 21. the bondage
of corruption; v. 23. the
redemption of the body.

Phil. iii. 20. in heaven; from
whence (ἐξ οὗ) also we wait
for a Saviour.

Phil. iii. 20. We wait (ἀπεκδε-
χόμεθα) for a Saviour.

Phil. iii. 21. the body of our
humiliation.

Phil. iii. 21. He is able even to
subject (ὑποτάξαι) all things
unto himself.

Earlier Epistles.

1 Cor. xv. 22, 36, 45 (same
Greek word).

1 Cor. xv. 42. sown in cor-
ruption; vv. 50, 53.

1 Thess. i. 10, to wait for his
Son from heaven. iv. 16.
The Lord himself shall
descend from heaven.
2 Thess. i. 7.

Rom. vii. 19. The earnest ex-
pectation of the creation
waiteth for the revealing
of the sons of God. v. 23.
waiting for our adoption,
to wit, the redemption of
our body.

1 Cor. xv. 42 f. It is sown in
corruption . . . in dis-
honour . . . in weakness.

1 Cor. xv. 27 ff. He hath
subjected all things (πάντα
ὑπέταξεν). All things are
put in subjection. All
things have been subjected
unto him. See Ps. viii. 6.

beliefs are as follows : (1) The Lord's Resurrection is the pledge and the pattern of the Resurrection of those who are His (1 Thess. iv. 14 ; 1 Cor. vi. 14, xv. 12 ff., 20, 23 ; 2 Cor. iv. 14 ; Rom. viii. 11 ; Phil. iii. 21). (2) The Resurrection will take place at the Lord's future coming (1 Thess. iv. 15 f. ; 1 Cor. xv. 23, 52 ; Phil. iii. 20). (3) The Resurrection will be the Resurrection of the body (1 Cor. vi. 13 ff., where St. Paul connects the future Resurrection of the body with the duty of preserving the chastity of the body ; 1 Cor. xv. 35-54 ; Rom. viii. 11, 23 ; Phil. iii. 21). (4) The Resurrection will not be " the re-constitution of the earthly body of flesh " (*Faith of a Modern Churchman*, pp. 25, 33) ; but the Resurrection will essentially involve a " change," whereby from the earthly body, as from a seed, there will arise a " spiritual body," " conformed to the body of [the] glory " of the Lord Jesus Christ. This change St. Paul describes by the following phrases : (i.) " We shall all be changed . . . we shall be changed " (*ἀλλαγησόμεθα*, 1 Cor. xv. 51 f.) ; (ii.) " We wish to put on the upper garment in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life " (2 Cor. v. 4) ; (iii.) God " shall quicken also your mortal bodies " (*ζωοποιήσας*, Rom. viii. 11 ; compare 1 Cor. xv. 22, 36, 45) ; (iv.) " Waiting for . . . the redemption

(τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν) of our body," *i.e.* "from the bondage of corruption" (τῆς φθορᾶς, Rom. viii. 21, 23; compare 1 Cor. xv. 42, 50, 53); (v.) "The Lord Jesus Christ . . . shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation" (μετασχηματίσει, Phil. iii. 21).

St. Paul then was unwaveringly constant to his primary beliefs as to the Resurrection of the dead. But on the other hand his mind was not stationary. As time went on he saw those primary beliefs with larger and nobler vision and enriched them with new conceptions. The truth of this assertion will appear in the sequel. We turn, therefore, to consider in detail the Apostle's teaching as to (1) the Resurrection of Christ; (2) the Resurrection of all those who are "in Christ."

(1) The Resurrection of Christ.

In the earliest Epistle of St. Paul's which has come down to us he very soon alludes to the Lord's Resurrection (1 Thess. i. 9 f.): "Ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead (ὃν ἡγείρεν ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν), even Jesus." This is the first reference to the Lord's Resurrection in all Christian literature. It exemplifies two thoughts which are characteristic of St. Paul and of the New Testament writers

generally. (i.) Jesus was raised from among (ἐκ) the dead. I venture to say that this expression would have been impossible had the Apostolic writers believed that the Lord's Resurrection coincided in time with His death. Clearly it implies that the Lord was one of the dead and that, while the other dead continued in death, He was lifted out of the grave and of death. The phrase (ἐκ νεκρῶν) occurs in all the groups of St. Paul's Epistles and in other Apostolic writers. It is indeed the phrase which is consistently used throughout the New Testament.¹ (ii.) God the Father raised Jesus from the dead.² Such language and such a thought demand as a basis not merely a belief in a series of visions but a belief in a definite event of transcendent meaning and importance, an event in which are involved the final purposes of God.

The *locus classicus* in St. Paul's writings as to the Resurrection of our Lord is obviously 1 Cor.

¹ See *e.g.* (1) 1 Thess. i. 10; (2) Gal. i. 1, 1 Cor. xv. 12, Rom. iv. 24; (3) Col. ii. 12, Eph. i. 20. In the Pastoral Epistles it is found in 2 Tim. ii. 8; compare *e.g.* Mark ix. 9, Luke xxiv. 46, Acts iii. 15, Heb. xiii. 20, 1 Peter i. 3, 21, John ii. 22, xxi. 14.

² This conception of the Resurrection prevails throughout the N.T. The only apparent exceptions (so far as I know) are John ii. 19, x. 18. In subapostolic literature the only exception of which I am aware is Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 2, "He truly suffered as also He truly *raised Himself*." Later on in the same letter (c. 6) Ignatius writes: "Which flesh by His goodness the Father raised"; so *Trall.* 9.

xv. 1-10. We note in passing that the Apostle is not here making a formal statement about the Resurrection nor claiming to say about it all he could say. He is giving an epitome of his oral teaching at Corinth. There is nothing to shew that he purports to give a full and complete enumeration of the appearances of the risen Lord. He mentions only those which were granted to the leaders of the Church whose names were well known to the Corinthians—Cephas, the Twelve, James, all the Apostles, himself—and the great public manifestation to “more than five hundred brethren at once.” And, in regard to these appearances, his summary is so rapid that he does not tell us a single detail or record a single word spoken either by or to the risen Christ. On more than one important question arising out of this passage I have already touched. Four remain about which I desire to say a few words.

(i.) The language of the passage shews unmistakably that St. Paul regarded the Resurrection as itself an event, quite distinct from, and preparatory to, the appearances which followed. “I delivered unto you . . . that (ὅτι) Christ died . . . and that (ὅτι) he was buried; and that (ὅτι) he hath been raised . . . and that (ὅτι) he appeared unto Cephas.” The articulation of the clauses by the repetition of “that” puts the

matter beyond doubt. Further, the perfect tense which St. Paul uses—"he hath been raised" (ἐγέρχεται)—shews that he regarded the event of the Resurrection as having an abiding effect, if we may so speak, on the Lord and as conditioning all the events which followed.

(ii.) St. Paul, following what he had "received" from those who had had part in all that took place, says that the event of the Resurrection was "on the third day." This statement coincides with what we learn from the narrative of each of the four Gospels, and from allusions in each of the Gospels and in the Acts.¹ We have seen that the mention of the third day excludes a so-called Resurrection of a purely spiritual nature coincident with the hour of the Lord's death.

(iii.) In this passage St. Paul's mind is full of the Resurrection, and it is the only passage in his Epistles in which he directly refers to the Burial of our Lord (compare Acts xiii. 29²). There are here three *momenta*. He died. He was buried.

¹ These allusions are (1) Mark viii. 31, ix. 31, x. 34, xiv. 58, xv. 29—the allusions therefore in this primary Gospel are frequent; all of these reappear in Matt., two of them in Luke; (2) Luke xxiv. 7, 21, 46; (3) Matt. xii. 40, xxvii. 63 f.; (4) Acts x. 40; (5) John ii. 19 f.

² "And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb."

He hath been raised. It follows that in St. Paul's view the Lord's Resurrection was the reversal not only of the Lord's Death, but also and primarily of the Lord's Burial. Quite independently of what the Apostle says in the sequel about the analogy between Christ's Resurrection and the Resurrection of the bodies of "the dead in Christ," from this passage alone it seems to me a strictly necessary inference that the Apostle's belief in the Resurrection of Christ included as an essential element a belief in the empty grave and the Resurrection of the Lord's body. He was buried: He hath been raised. These words are in complete harmony with, and anticipate, what St. Paul says later on: "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory." Further, we have already seen that, in two later passages in his Epistles (Rom. vi. 3 f., Col. ii. 12), St. Paul indirectly, indeed, but quite clearly refers to the Lord's Burial and Resurrection. They correspond respectively to two acts in the ceremony of Baptism and to two spiritual realities of which those two acts were the symbols (see above, pp. 121 f.). These later passages entirely depend for their meaning on the view of the Lord's Resurrection which St. Paul took when he wrote to Corinth, viz., that the Resurrection was the reversal of the Burial. And the second of these two passages

(Col. ii. 12) occurs in one of the Epistles of the captivity. It runs thus: "Having been buried with him (*συνταφέντες αὐτῷ*) in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him (*συνηγέρθητε*)."
I venture to assert—and I call attention to the assertion—that the two correlative phrases, "buried with him," "raised with him," demonstrate that the view of the Lord's Resurrection which, as we have seen, St. Paul took when he wrote the first Epistle to the Corinthians he held unchanged when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians.

St. Paul then from first to last believed that the Lord's body was raised from the grave. But can the resurrection of the Lord's body be justly called a "physical resurrection"? The phrase itself, so far as I have observed, is not employed by Canon Glazebrook; but it is a favourite phrase with writers of his school. They have used it in the past and they use it to-day. I again protest against the use of this phrase, and repudiate it. However unconscious those who use it may be of its true character, it is a wholly unworthy parody of the view of the Resurrection of the Lord's body which is held and set forth by those who follow the teaching of St. Paul. To them the Resurrection of the Lord is an event which is on a level with creation, an event in which

the ultimate realities of the world and of life are involved. It is the reconciliation of the antithesis which exists for us between matter and spirit. We have already seen (see above, pp. 39 ff.) that as to the Resurrection of the dead in Christ St. Paul's words explicitly exclude the idea of a mere "reconstitution of the earthly body." So it must be with the Resurrection of Him who is "the first-fruits." In Him as "the first-fruits" the fulfilment of our belief, assured to us by St. Paul, as to the future Resurrection has been anticipated. In His Resurrection He was "changed"; in His Resurrection the Father "fashioned [His body] anew." The meaning I desire to express is set forth better than I can set it forth in a passage of Bishop Westcott's *Revelation of the Risen Lord* (pp. 7 f.) :—

"The Revelation of the Risen Christ is indeed, in the fullest sense of the word, a Revelation; an unveiling of that which was before undiscovered and unknown. . . . As we fix our thoughts steadily upon them [*i.e.* the different appearances of Christ after His Resurrection] we learn how life is independent of its present conditions; how we also can live through death; how we can retain all the issues of the past without being bound by the

limitations under which they were shaped. Christ rose from the grave changed and yet the same ; and in Him we have the pledge and the type of our rising.

“ Christ was changed. He was no longer subject to the laws of the material order to which His earthly life was previously conformed. As has been well said : ‘ What was natural to Him before is now miraculous ; what was before miraculous is now natural.’ Or to put this thought in another form, in our earthly life the spirit is manifested through the body : in the life of the Risen Christ the Body is manifested (may we not say so ?) through the Spirit.

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“ Thus Christ is seen to be changed, but none the less He is also seen to be essentially the same. Nothing has been left in the grave though all has been transfigured.”

That Christ was “ changed and yet the same,” is the lesson, I believe, which the artless record of the Gospels presents to us. For that record I do not claim here any more than elsewhere the attribute of inerrancy. It is possible that this or that detail in regard to events and in regard to words spoken may conceivably be due to the

moulding influence of oral tradition or of ideas current at the time. But such an admission does not in my judgment touch the essential nature of the Lord's Resurrection as we find it described in the Gospels. There is an undesigned consistency about the Gospels which is their best advocate. The various lines of evidence contained in them harmonise. The truth as to the Lord's risen body is not conveyed either by the word "spiritual" alone or by the word "material" or "physical" alone. In the Resurrection the Lord's body was "changed." It was "fashioned anew" that it might be "the body of His glory."

(iv.) I have already dealt with St. Paul's words, "the first-fruits of them that have fallen asleep. . . . Christ the first-fruits" (1 Cor. xv. 20, 23; see above, pp. 99 ff.). It is important that we should note that in his Epistle to the Colossians (i. 18) St. Paul reaffirms this belief as to Christ's Resurrection. Christ is, he says, "the first-born from among the dead" (*πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν*¹). The metaphor indeed in which he clothes his thought is quite different from that which he had used years before. But its significance is the same, and it will be observed that in

¹ Compare and contrast Rev. i. 5: "The first-born of the dead" (*πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν*); and compare the words of the Pauline speech in Acts xxvi. 23.

the phrase now used the Apostle gives clear expression to the thought that the Lord was once truly numbered among those who had already died.

(2) The Resurrection of the "dead in Christ."

(i.) Canon Glazebrook does not raise the question as to the meaning of the metaphor of "sowing" which plays such an important part in 1 Cor. xv.; see *vv.* 35 ff., 42 ff. But the question has been raised; and on our answer to it so largely depends our view of St. Paul's conception of the Resurrection that it would be unwise for me to pass it by. Let us begin with Chrysostom's comment on *v.* 42 (ed. Ben. x. 390 C; ed. Field, ii. p. 522): "By sowing here the Apostle means not our generation in the womb, but the burying in the earth, the dissolution of the bodies which have died, their reduction to ashes." These are the only applications of the metaphor of sowing to the body which have ever become commonplaces in human speech, and which could naturally suggest themselves here. For reasons which will appear in a moment Chrysostom was right in rejecting the interpretation which makes the Apostle refer here to the sowing of the body in the womb, and in choosing the other interpretation. But Dr. Charles of

Westminster, to whom we owe so great a debt for his pioneer work in the apocalyptic literature of the Jews, suggests another interpretation (*Eschatology*, ed. 2, p. 450) :—

“ The sowing here cannot mean the *mere burying* of the body in the grave. Such a meaning of σπείρειν [to sow] is wholly unattested ; it is rather the placing the vital principle or spirit in its material environment here on earth, where, even as a seed gathers to itself a body from the matter around it, so the spirit of man fashions for itself a body out of the materials around it. Thus the entire life of man in this world, from its first appearance to the obsequies that attest its departure, corresponds to the sowing of the seed in the earth.”

Does the fact, if fact it be,¹ that such a meaning of “ to sow ” is “ wholly unattested ” make it impossible that by sowing here St. Paul means the burial of the body ? This use of the metaphor of sowing is almost pointless unless it looks forward to an uprising, a resurrection. Such a use

¹ Wetstein *in loc.* quotes Plutarch, *de Iside et Osiride*, 377 B : “ They say that Osiris is buried when the seed is sown in the earth and is hidden, and that he comes to life again and appears when it begins to grow.”

therefore of the word "to sow" could hardly be looked for in Greek or in Latin classical literature. We remember those saddest of lines in Moschus' elegy on the death of Bion (106 ff.): "The mallows and the green parsley and the strong twining anise, when they perish in the garden, afterward live again and grow another year. But we men, the great and the strong or the wise, when once we die, deaf in the hollow earth we sleep the long unending sleep which knoweth no awakening." On the other hand, those Jewish writings which look forward to a resurrection are very narrowly limited in extent. It would be unreasonable to expect what is distinctively a Christian metaphor in pre-Christian times. Again, is it really conceivable that St. Paul, writing to ordinary Christian converts at Corinth, should employ the common word "to sow" with a meaning so recondite and, unless a scholiast in the secret were at hand, so unintelligible, as that which Dr. Charles puts into words? I doubt whether a single instance of *this* use of the word "to sow" can be produced.¹ But in truth in a context in which

¹ Dr. Charles writes in a footnote (p. 450): "It has not been observed that the same figure of speech is used in 4 Ezra v. 48, *qui seminati sunt super eam (i.e. terram)* = 'those sown on the earth.' This is exactly the Pauline idea." It is necessary, however, to look at the context of this passage. Ezra asks why God did not create all men at once, those who have been, who are, who shall be. The answer is: "Ask

"heart speaketh to heart" the one thing needful in a metaphor is that it should inevitably explain itself. Is this the case here? The seed answers to the body. The plant which develops from the seed answers to the resurrection-body. The seed is sown by being buried in the ground. The body is buried in the ground. Is it not clear as daylight that the sowing of the body can mean nothing else than the burying of the body? Moreover, we must turn back once more and note the juxtaposition of the two words in reference to the Lord, "He was buried," "He hath been raised" (*v.* 4). The words "buried," "raised," of *v.* 4, exactly correspond to the words "it is sown," "it is raised" of *vv.* 42 f. And we must not fail to observe that the metaphor of the "first-fruits" applied to Christ anticipates the

the womb of a woman, If thou bringest forth ten children, wherefore doest thou it in a prolonged time? Demand therefore of her womb that it produce ten at one time. And I said: It cannot; it can only give birth to each in its time. And he said to me: I have also given a womb to the earth for those who are sown upon it during a prolonged time." Thus the context leads up to the use of the word "sown"; and it is clear that this "sowing" is strictly analogous to the "sowing" of human generation. It should be added that the reading is not certain. To turn to another point: when, criticising the ordinary interpretation of "it is sown in weakness," Dr. Charles says (*p.* 452): "To apply such a term as 'weakness' to the dead body would be absurd," he has for the moment forgotten what is no small part of the pathos of the chamber of death.

metaphor of the "seed" and the "sowing," which appears later, and is a natural link in the Apostle's thought between the earlier verse which speaks of Christ's burial and Resurrection, and the later verses which speak of the body being "sown" and being "raised."

But here it is necessary to guard against misconception. We have seen that with strong emphasis St. Paul states his belief that in the Resurrection a "change" will be effected (see above, pp. 39 ff.). We have seen that he teaches on the one hand that the "spiritual body" will be developed out of the natural body and, on the other, that the spiritual body will be the gift of God (see above, pp. 118 ff.). The Apostle would have eagerly declared that he beheld these things as reflections in a mirror and heard of them as we hear riddles and parables. In human words he "tells us a mystery." His language, we are sure, is inadequate and falls short of the full and ultimate truth. For no human language can express, as no human mind can conceive, the realities of "the regeneration of all things," of which the Resurrection, as St. Paul teaches, will be a part. But it is to my mind indisputable that St. Paul desires to warn us against unworthy conceptions of the Resurrection. The Resurrection is not a mere physical process, though

Christian people, clean contrary to the Apostle's teaching, have sometimes been content to regard it as such. It often seems to be assumed that modern science and modern modes of life and of thought are responsible for first raising insuperable difficulties in the way of a purely material view of the Resurrection. It is not so. Such difficulties are not confined to modern times. Our earliest brethren in the faith were confronted by them. There is a remarkable passage at the close of the letter which the Churches of Vienne and Lyons addressed to their Brethren in Asia and Phrygia, and in which they give an account of the persecution they endured under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius in A.D. 177. It is preserved by the historian Eusebius (*H.E.* v. 1). The passage is as follows :—

“ The bodies of the martyrs, having been treated with all kinds of public insult and having been exposed for six days, were then burned and reduced to ashes and swept by these godless men into the Rhone where it flows close by, in order that no, not so much as a relic of the martyrs might any more appear on earth. And all this they did, as though they were able to conquer God and to rob the martyrs of their regeneration, ‘ in order that,’

as they themselves said, ' they might not have any hope of resurrection, trusting in which they introduce among us a foreign and new-fangled religion, and despise all terrors, going even to death with readiness and with joy. Let us now see whether they will rise again, and whether their God is able to help them and to deliver them out of our hands.' "

It was the idea of the heathen, misled (we do not doubt) by the gross and earthly views of the Resurrection which they had heard were held by some of their Christian neighbours, that by scattering the ashes of their victims they could rob them of any share in that Resurrection which was the object of their steadfast hope and belief. But that one phrase in the letter, " And all this they did, as though they were able to conquer God and to rob the martyrs of their regeneration," clearly reveals to us that the Christian survivors of the persecution realised that in ways they did not attempt to forecast the devices of the heathen would be vain, and that their brethren would have part in the Resurrection of the body. We who desire to learn our faith as to the Resurrection from the balanced teaching of St. Paul share this confidence.

For we do not believe that the idea of the Resurrection of the body involves the idea of a final collection of the scattered particles which together at the hour of death made up the body, or that the only real identity consists in a physical identity of material. If we make the attempt, it is only a provisional attempt, to put our belief into our own words, they will, I think, shape themselves somewhat thus. In our Resurrection, as in Christ's Resurrection, we expect that the antithesis between spirit and matter will be done away. For the full realisation of the personality of each man, we believe that God, at the time of the "restoration of all things," will bestow upon each man a spiritual body, so intimately related to the natural body, so truly, in that world of realities, corresponding to the natural body in this world, that it must be said to have its origin in it, as the full corn in the ear has its origin in the seed.

(ii.) St. Paul, consistent throughout in his conception of the Resurrection, enriches it with new thoughts.

(a) As St. Paul's ministry passed by, and his experience as a man and as a teacher waxed riper and riper, he became more conscious of the place which the Holy Spirit fills in the economy of man's salvation. St. Paul's sense of the vital

importance of the recognition of the Holy Spirit's activity finds repeated expression in the Epistles of the second group (1, 2 Cor., Gal., Rom.). In the first Epistle to the Corinthians there is a passage (vi. 13-20), where in the same context thoughts are separately set forth which together suggest that the Holy Spirit is concerned in the Resurrection ("The body is not for fornication but for the Lord. . . . God . . . will raise up us . . . , your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you"); but nothing definite is said. In the great passage of the second Epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. v. 1-9) St. Paul directly connects the work of God in preparing men for the Resurrection with His gift to them of His spirit, whose presence with them now is the pledge of a more intimate fellowship with them hereafter—"He that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (see above, pp. 117 f.). When we come to the Epistle to the Romans, we find that in viii. 11 the Apostle has taken the final step in the working out of the thought. There is indeed unfortunately some uncertainty as to the precise text. According to one reading the indwelling Spirit is the agent in the Resurrection of the body, according to the other the indwelling Spirit is the cause of that Resurrection. But these two conceptions of the

activity of the Spirit are very cognate, and they virtually coalesce—"He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit," *or* "because of his Spirit, that dwelleth in you." "In either case the effect is due to the indwelling of the Spirit, and not to a power working *ab extra* ; there is no resurrection after the likeness of Christ's Resurrection except for those who already are alive in spirit through the immanent presence of the Spirit of God and of Christ.¹"

(b) When St. Paul was a prisoner first at Caesarea and later at Rome and was thus necessarily withdrawn from his itinerant work as a missionary, he had leisure of mind to think out the significance of the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The outcome of his meditations we have in the Epistles of the Captivity (Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians). It was natural that at this epoch of his spiritual education he should be led afresh to set his conception of the Resurrection in relation to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. This he did in two ways. On the one hand, he describes the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as "fashioning anew the body of our humiliation" (Phil. iii. 21). In earlier days he had stopped short of this and had regarded the

¹ Dr. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the N.T.*, p. 217.

Resurrection of men as the work of God the Father, "who raised up the Lord Jesus" (2 Cor. iv. 14; Rom. viii. 11). If the Apostle had been asked to explain his apparent change of doctrine, he would have answered that he had changed nothing in his doctrine. He would have urged that now as always he looked to God the Father as the final source of all quickening power, but that he now realised the universality of the mediatorship of Christ alike in the world of nature and in the world of grace, and that therefore he knew that Christ must be the mediator in that regeneration in which, if we may so speak, the material and the spiritual will coalesce and be at one. On the other hand, St. Paul was led at this time to recognise Christ as the goal as well as the beginning of the universe—"All things have been created through him and unto him" (*εἰς αὐτόν*, Col. i. 16); "To sum up all things in Christ" (Eph. i. 10). Of this conception of Christ, universal in its range, the Apostle found a particular application in his doctrine of the Resurrection. "The body of our humiliation" shall then be "conformed to the body of his glory." This belief completes his doctrine of the Resurrection as essentially a "change," a "fashioning anew" of the body—an element in his conception of the Resurrection which we

again emphatically assert was primary and fundamental.

Thus I have endeavoured to shew that, while St. Paul's doctrine of the Resurrection remained essentially one and the same throughout his apostolate, he enriched it with beliefs which necessarily grew out of his progressive apprehension of the Christian doctrine of God.

The Church's belief in the future Resurrection of men has always been rooted in the Church's belief in the Resurrection of Christ. And the Church's belief in the Resurrection of Christ has always been the belief that on the third day He rose again from the dead, and that His Resurrection was a resurrection of His body. That is the faith through which the Church in the early centuries conquered the Roman Empire, and through which in later days in spite of its numberless declensions and sins the Church has been what it has been among Christian peoples, and among non-Christian races has won fresh triumphs for its Master. Moreover, this belief is based on testimony, the testimony of the New Testament, that is, the testimony of eye-witnesses and of their immediate followers. On the other hand, the belief which is set forth in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, as the preceding pages have shewn, has no support in the New Testament and there-

fore no historical basis. It is the modern invention of a few persons. It clings indeed desperately to the word "Resurrection"; for that word is indissolubly linked with many most sacred associations. But the blunt question must be asked and must be faced whether this use of the word "Resurrection" is morally defensible. Words are current coin among men, meaning what they mean; no one has a right to set upon a word a fresh superscription of his own and arbitrarily to assign to it a novel signification. Through the centuries of the history of the Church the Resurrection of Christ has meant not that in the hour of His death on the Cross His spirit proved to be immortal, but that on the third day His body was raised from the grave, the same but transfigured, and that therefore no element of His humanity—body, soul, or spirit—continued under "the bondage of corruption." The fact, as the Church has always believed it to be, that the body of the Lord was raised by God from the grave, and, as it was raised, glorified, is the divine and effectual antidote to that doctrine which in early days found expression in certain Gnostic sects, and which, however unconsciously, is being now revived by such a book as *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, the doctrine that matter is contemptible, and that matter lies outside the power of

God to redeem and to regenerate.¹ From this doctrine history shews that a harvest of evil and corruption springs. Christ's Resurrection is the strong assurance that it is false, and that nothing that God has made is vile and worthless. But the confession of belief in the Lord's Resurrection is an unspeakably awful confession, which we often dishonour by our glib and light utterance of it. It has implications of which we acknow-

¹ For the historical connexion between the denial of the Resurrection of the body and contempt for matter see Irenaeus, *Contr. Haer.* v. xxxi. 1 (ed. Massuet): "The heretics despising the creation of God and not allowing the salvation of their flesh, contemning also the promise of God and in their intellect altogether soaring above God, say that directly they die they soar above the heavens and above the Creator [the Demiurge, *i.e.*, the inferior Creator] and go to the Mother or to that Father whom they themselves invent. What wonder then is it if those who reject the general Resurrection, and, so far as in them lies, take it clean away, are ignorant as to the order of the Resurrection, refusing to understand that, if what they allege were true, the Lord Himself (in whom they say that they believe) would not have risen on the third day, but giving up His spirit on the Cross would immediately have gone away upwards, leaving His body to the earth?" This passage should be compared with a passage in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* (c. 80; 306 D): "If you have met certain who are called Christians, who do not accept this doctrine [*i.e.* Chiliastic doctrine], but who dare to blaspheme the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, who also say that there is no resurrection of the dead, but that at the moment of death (*ἅμα τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν*) their souls are taken up into heaven, do not imagine that they are Christians." It must be noted that Justin does not condemn these persons because they reject his favourite Chiliastic doctrine; for just above he has said: "I have pointed out to you that many among the Christians of pure and devout mind do not acknowledge this doctrine."

ledge that as yet we are wholly ignorant. We can sincerely make this confession when, and only when, we associate it with a whole-hearted faith in the power of God and in the eternal life-giving purpose of God.

I have now completed my examination of those parts of *The Faith of a Modern Churchman* which treat of the Virgin Birth of our Lord and of His Resurrection. In this investigation I have simply endeavoured to meet criticism by criticism. I only ask that the limits which I have set myself be noted. I have not here dealt with other portions of Canon Glazebrook's book, nor indeed have I studied them with critical care. Let me say that in them I can well believe that there are things that are valuable and true, and things that are well and forcibly expressed. Nor again has it been part of my task either to review the arguments of other writers generally, or to attempt to state in its fulness the case for a belief either in the Virgin Birth or in the Resurrection of the body of the Lord. What then on the intellectual side must be the verdict on this strictly representative book in regard to the very important sections of it which I have considered? The question is a necessary one. My answer shall be brief, and I have no choice but to speak plainly.

The writer of a book designed to help "men and women lacking the opportunity for theological research,¹" is pre-eminently bound to strain every nerve to be accurate, and therefore fair. For such persons, even though they may be "educated and thoughtful," are very seldom in a position properly to scrutinise the arguments which are urged and the statements which are made. These to a great extent they accept on the strength of the writer's reputation, especially if he speaks as a representative of a well-known body of men. Now in the work of the best scholars, those who are models of exact care, mistakes creep in, slips (as we call them), small and superficial blemishes which are noted, corrected, and forgotten. But the mistakes which I have been obliged to point out in this volume are not of this kind. Many times we have been startled by the grave inaccuracy of a statement, and therefore by its unfairness, of which, however, the writer himself, I am certain, was wholly unconscious. I have also been forced to call attention to a neglect of evidence and to mistakes of a quite unusual kind, to errors, that is, which enter into the fabric of the argument and entirely vitiate it. On the intellectual side, there-

¹ The Editor's "Foreword" to *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*.

fore, in regard to the momentous subjects which we have considered, the foundation of "the faith of a modern Churchman" is not by this book well and truly laid. On this matter it is necessary to speak without reserve. For not a little intimidation is used by some; and such intimidation tells especially among younger people and those who are not able to exercise an independent judgment. It is suggested that not to agree with the conclusions of the so-called modern Churchman—in truth no section of Churchmen can justly arrogate this title to themselves—is to shew a deficiency in intellectual force and enlightenment. Many examples of the expression of this spirit might be adduced. A remarkable instance is presented by the motto which this volume, marked by the characteristics which I have had to indicate, is so unfortunate as to have stamped upon its cover, a saying ascribed to Erasmus, "By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance." The arrogant and menacing implications of these words are obvious. Such a sentence is a modern equivalent of the ancient "let him be anathema," which now we all reject and condemn.

In these anxious days, second only to our supreme need of the guidance which is from above,

which inspires and hallows every other help, is our need of the light of sound learning, old and new. In this light it is our plain and difficult duty to endeavour to "prove all things," things new as well as things old.

CHAPTER V

“SYMBOLICAL INTERPRETATION”

IN the earlier pages I have shewn, I trust, that a reasonable answer can be given to the arguments brought forward in Canon Glazebrook's volume against a belief in the Virgin Birth and in the Resurrection of the Lord's body as historical events. I must now pass on to consider in itself the “claim” which is urged that the two articles of the Apostles' Creed dealing with the Virgin Birth and the Lord's Resurrection on the third day may rightly receive a “symbolical interpretation.” It will presently appear that, if these two articles are “symbolically interpreted,” other articles are seriously affected.

But before I deal with this question in detail I desire emphatically to reassert my full and whole-hearted recognition of the claims of historical criticism and of the legitimacy of its application to the New Testament. Perhaps I may be

allowed to quote some words which I wrote some five years ago.¹

“ We cannot stay, even if we would, the application of historical criticism to the records of the Lord’s life on earth. Nay, what reason can we allege for thinking that the development of scientific research in our own day is any less a gift of God to the world and to the Church than the Renaissance four centuries ago? In both these great intellectual movements we cannot fail to discern dangers of exaggeration, of perverseness, of irreverence, of pride. But both seem to bear in themselves signs of being parts in the providential ordering of the world’s history. It would be suicidal, then, for the Church to refrain from a movement which it can neither prevent nor silence nor condemn. If we can conceive such a position actually taken, the inference would be inevitable that the Church feared the results of searching examination; that it loved tradition rather than truth, darkness rather than light. No less inevitable would be the issue. The Church would shrink and dwindle and cease to be the spiritual home of those

¹ *The Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism*, Preface, pp. vii f.; compare pp. 9, 75 ff.; and see above, pp. 31 f.

who read and think. It would lose, and it would deserve to lose, its large hold on human life."

These words I unreservedly reaffirm. But of course there must be limits to the acceptance of the alleged results of criticism within a Church which maintains a corporate life. There are those who, studying with candour and honesty, have come to the conclusion that Jesus Christ is not an historical character and that His earthly life is a myth. Clearly such a position as this is not compatible with membership in the Christian Church. Sincerity in study is not sufficient. In the Church there must be a standard of belief. What is it?

The Church holds the historic faith as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. The statements of that Creed it affirms as true not because they are the statements of the Creed but because they are based on the authority of the New Testament. If it were shewn in a way which convinced not individuals but the Christian society that the statements of this Creed were not in harmony with the New Testament rightly interpreted, the Church would be bound either to revise it or to renounce it. The Church, then, holds the Apostles' Creed because it believes it to be in accordance

with the Apostolic witness of the New Testament. And this Creed, with its historical statements, is not a creation of days far removed from the Apostles. It is the old baptismal Creed of Western Christendom. Its historical clauses, with the exception of the article as to the Descent into Hell, go back to the Creeds and the Creed-like statements of the second century. One of these Creeds, the Creed of the Church of Rome, it seems possible to trace back to the early years of that century.¹ The Apostles' Creed then, being what it is, has a twofold function.

In the first place, it appeals to the student as a student. It reveals to him the convictions as to the life of the Founder of the Church which were strongly held by those early generations of Christians to which the tradition of the Apostolic generation itself was not a remote or formal thing. These convictions have received the imprimatur—if that be not too cold a word—of the generations which have followed. Thus the Apostles' Creed constitutes for the student a great human testimony as to the events of the earthly life of Jesus Christ which the Christian Society itself has selected as of the first importance. It represents the judgment of "simple believers," to borrow a term which figures much in the writings of

¹ Burn, *An Introduction to the Creeds*, pp. 64 ff.

Clement of Alexandria, and also of the thinkers of the Church. Sometimes we hear the judgment of the former strangely disparaged. They have been compared to a long row of figures on the right hand of a decimal point, which you may prolong as far as you will but which can never amount to a single unit. Such an estimate of the authority of the great multitude of believers is, I believe, profoundly untrue. We dare not forget the saying of our Saviour which speaks of things hidden from the wise and prudent but revealed unto babes, nor the fact that the gift of the Spirit was bestowed on all. It is of course most true that "the simple believer" can form no opinion as to the details or the processes of a critical or a philosophical argument. But the heart of "simple believers" and their conscience often guide them to the true issue, as the swallows are brought by the subtle power of instinct across continents and seas to the home where they would be. Though the words need qualifying in more ways than one, there is a profound truth in the familiar epigram of St. Augustine, "*Securus judicat orbis terrarum.*" The great company of believers throughout all the centuries is, if I may be allowed to use the expression, the democratic second chamber of the kingdom of God on earth, the function of which is to test and, if need be,

to send back for maturer consideration the tentative conclusions of a section or school of the little aristocracy of scholars. The many are not infallible. Guidance, not infallibility, was promised to the Church as a body. But the judgment of the many as to what should be believed about the Lord Jesus Christ is a majestic human judgment which a student, especially a Christian student, cannot safely neglect or trifle with. And if this judgment is recorded anywhere it is recorded in the Apostles' Creed.

In the second place, in the Church of England the Apostles' Creed is the authoritative standard of belief for all. It forms part of the terms on which are granted admission to membership and admission to office. Loyalty to the Apostles' Creed, therefore, is incumbent on all, but pre-eminently incumbent on the clergy. It is true that there is no tendency, of which I at least have ever seen any sign, on the part of those in authority to deal in an inquisitorial fashion with the clergy any more than with the laity. In ordinary circumstances a man's own contentment with his position as one which befits a man of honour is regarded as sufficient and satisfactory. There is no desire to make a man an offender for a suspension of judgment in these difficult days, or for an attitude of perplexity or even of un-

certainly. But it cannot reasonably be questioned that there must be some limitation in regard to the officers of the Church whom the Church commissions to teach. Instead of using words of my own I will here quote what appears to me a fair and temperate statement of the position made by the present Archbishop of Canterbury.

"A man is ordained Deacon or Priest or Bishop. He is, in one of these capacities, or in some other office, entrusted with the right to speak and teach as an officer of the Church of Christ—or, here among us, of the Church of England. The doctrine of that Church is safeguarded, we say, by formularies. We do not mean by this that the formularies prohibit independent research on the part of an honest man, be he priest or layman—as happened long ago in the case, say, of Galileo: we mean that it is only within the lines laid down by those formularies that a man will be given, by the responsible accreditors or living authorities within the Church, the privileges and rights of being one of its authorised teachers or guides. If his researches lead him to conclusions which are outside these limits, he must, as an honest man, hold to what he thinks he

has found to be true, nor will any one try to silence him if he desire to speak. But he must also expect that those upon whom rests the solemn responsibility of deciding whether or not to accredit him as a teacher, or to entrust him with a teacher's privileges and rights, will, like himself, discharge their conscientious responsibilities. He must expect—it is surely the very condition under which he seeks ordination or licence—that, if the boundary-line of our Creeds and formularies has in their judgment been traversed, they will, without either challenging his honesty or closing his lips, decline to entrust him with the special privileges attaching to a man bidden by the authorities to be a teacher or spokesman within the Church whose formularies—as boundary-lines—he has now, in their opinion, transgressed.”¹

What then does assent to the Apostles' Creed mean? It is true that when we adopt the language of a document which is not our own

¹ *The Character and Call of the Church of England*, 1912, p. 50. Compare my *Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism*, Preface, pp. viii-xii. In regard to the history and the scope of the Declaration of Assent made by every clergyman at his Ordinations and at his admission to any office in the Church, I should like to commend to all who wish to understand the subject the Bishop of Gloucester's (Dr. Gibson's) *The Declaration of Assent : an Appeal to Conscience*, 1918.

composition, especially if that document has come down to us from a former age, some measure of accommodation of meaning will sometimes be necessary. No question as to this principle can reasonably be raised when trivialities or sentiment alone are concerned. In such cases an effort will be made to secure alteration when an opportunity can be used for this purpose or can be created. But it cannot be said that the clauses of the Apostles' Creed are of small importance, or that the difference between the meaning attached to them according to the "claim" we are considering and according to the actual language of the clauses is slight. These clauses do not refer to events incidental and of small import like the sixteenth-century Proper Preface for Whit Sunday, though even here there is nothing in the language (if I may speak of myself) which prevents my attaching to it the historical interpretation which I attach to the narrative in the Acts.¹ Nor does it seem to me that these clauses of the Apostles' Creed are in any true sense analogous to the "warning clauses" of the *Quicunque Vult*. Let

¹ I would refer to my *Credibility of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 35 ff. It is well known that in the preparation for the answer to the Royal Letters of Business a Resolution has been adopted by both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury, substituting for the present Proper Preface a new one largely based on the old Sarum Preface.

me be quite candid on this subject. The intensely keen distress which I feel when these clauses are recited in public worship largely arises from the sense that in using them we are going to the very limit of permissible accommodation of language. It is quite possible, though Canon Glazebrook has not done so, to found on the use of these clauses an argument in favour of his "claim," which at least superficially and controversially is telling. And yet in my conscience I know that the two cases profoundly differ. The clauses of the *Quicumque* in question do not belong to the credal portion of that document; in character they answer to the *anathema* of the Nicene Creed. In such clauses the divergence of feeling, and therefore of language, between different ages cannot but make itself felt. These clauses are not prefaced by an "I believe." Again, the New Testament writers, when they used warning language, certainly had not before them the definitions of the *Quicumque*; at least in that sense, therefore, these clauses have not the authority of the New Testament behind them. Moreover it will be admitted, I think, that *every one* in reciting these clauses makes some kind of mental qualification¹; and we have an explanation

¹ Compare the words of Dr. Sparrow Simpson in a speech in Convocation: "He was convinced that at no time in the

of their meaning which comes to us with the authority of Convocation. Lastly, those who have been most conscious of the difficulty have consistently made every effort to obtain relief from the recitation of these "warning" clauses in public worship.

To return to the clauses of the Apostles' Creed. There is no requirement of which I ever heard that every one who honestly believes the historical facts stated in them should interpret those facts in the same way. Different ages of the Church, for example, and different individuals vary, and vary greatly, in the manner in which they endeavour to realise to themselves the resurrection of the Lord's body on the third day. Probably no two believers have precisely the same idea of that supreme event. But these diversities of interpretation, which seem to be legitimate and necessary, differ not in degree but in kind from the so-called "symbolical interpretation," for which a "claim" is now put forward. The phrase "symbolical interpretation" in this connexion is a strictly euphemistic phrase. In reality "symbolical interpretation" is not interpretation at all. It must be bluntly said that,

history of the document was it supposed that the clauses were to be taken without qualification" (*Chronicle of Convocation*, 1918, No. 1, p. 40).

when we analyse it, "symbolical interpretation" means two things: (1) the denial of the event stated in the Creed; (2) the substitution of something else, "a spiritual truth," in its place. I will apply this definition of "symbolical interpretation" to the two clauses in question.

"Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." Beyond all dispute these words are a categorical affirmation that our Lord, without the intervention of a human father, was born of a Virgin. When these words are "symbolically interpreted," this affirmation is denied. For what is thus denied there is substituted the doctrine of the Incarnation, which, it is said, is the real and essential meaning of these clauses of the Creed. I need not at this moment comment on the denial. But on the substitution a word must be said. The Apostles' Creed is not primarily, like the Nicene Creed, theological. Doctrines, indeed, are involved in the Apostles' Creed; it could not be otherwise. But they take the form of a confession of faith in the divine Persons. The Incarnation as a doctrine is not explicitly set forth. But it finds expression in the opening words of the second paragraph of the Creed: "I believe . . . in Jesus Christ"—the historical man; "his only Son our Lord"—the divine Son. All the clauses which follow deal with the historical

working out of the Incarnation, the earthly history of Him who is God and Man. Moreover, it is in fact a mistake to suppose that the confession of the Virgin Birth is equivalent to a confession of the Incarnation.¹ Arius himself, for example, did not question the Virgin Birth, but he denied the Incarnation. Thus the substitution, when it is examined, proves to be arbitrary and delusive. The denial remains.

"The third day he rose again from the dead." This clause admittedly affirms that the flesh or body of the Lord was raised on the third day. This is denied. There is substituted the "spiritual truth" that the Lord survived death, and that in the hour of His death His spirit, clothed in a spiritual body, went to God. The "spiritual truth" substituted for the historical event rests, as I have already pointed out, on no authority; it is the pious fancy of a few scholars in these later years. Its acceptance dislocates the Creed. And it implies that it is no part of the divine purpose to redeem and glorify matter, and that matter therefore may be disregarded as worthy of contempt.

It is therefore clear that "symbolical inter-

¹ Compare Bethune-Baker, *The Miracle of Christianity*, p. 11: "Many Christians in the past have believed the miraculous conception and birth without holding the doctrine of the Incarnation as the Church has defined it."

pretation " of articles in the Creed involves much more than can reasonably be covered by any genuine interpretation. Whatever is affirmed has the way cleared for it by a direct denial of the event which the Creed states as an event. Moreover it is a widely subversive force. The historical portion of the Creed is disintegrated. So far as I can see, if the " symbolical interpretation " of these two clauses is accepted which is proposed and defended in *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, then, so far as belief is concerned, that portion of the Creed which deals with our Lord must be rewritten somewhat thus :—

“ And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was born of Mary the wife of Joseph, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified and dead ; Whose spirit in the hour of his death, clothed with a spiritual body, went to God ; Whose body was buried ; Who in the hour of each man's death judgeth him.”

Moreover, in the third paragraph of the Creed, the words “ The immortality of the soul ” must be substituted for the words “ The Resurrection of the body.”

This reconstruction seems to me to be absolutely required by reason of necessary consequential alterations. For the “ spiritual truth ” which is

put in the place of the Resurrection on the third day renders unmeaning or impossible the clauses, "He descended into hell," "He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." Whatever truth is contained in these clauses is part of the "spiritual truth" which takes the place of the article "The third day he rose again from the dead."

I have thus put with a clearness which, as I trust, cannot be misunderstood the divergence between belief and Creed which is essentially involved in the "claim" that the clauses of the Creed as to the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of the Lord "may be or ought to be interpreted symbolically." It will be observed that I bring no charge of heresy against the upholders of this "claim," as those who oppose it are often said to do by those who make it. Heresy is a formal matter with which the Church in its corporate capacity and not the critic is concerned. On this count I here neither accuse nor condemn nor acquit. Nor again do I assert that belief in the evangelical facts of the Virgin Birth and of the Resurrection of the Lord's body is necessary to salvation. No man has a right to place himself on the judgment-seat of God. And, warned by the experience of the past, few indeed would now presume to pronounce a verdict that any of their

fellow-men by reason of their unbelief or misbelief *could* not be saved. I know of no one who maintains that an honest belief in all the historical articles of the Apostles' Creed is the only door through which a Christian man can enter the Kingdom of God. Such a position would mean an altogether erroneous view of the function of the Creed. On these matters I have so often seen signs of misunderstanding that it seems to me wise and right to make my own position absolutely plain. But, having explained myself on this point, I appeal to the conscience of my fellow-Churchmen to consider if this divergence between belief and Creed is tolerable, whether we regard the question from the personal or from the corporate side.

The conscience of men bears witness to the great fundamental principle of the sacredness of human words as the revelation of human thought. That sacredness is not diminished when the occasion on which the words are used is sacred and when their context is sacred. Christ indeed alone is the Truth as well as the Word. To His perfection we cannot attain. But to urge a "claim" to violate this principle or to acquiesce in that "claim" is to sow the seeds of moral and intellectual decline. In the early days Christians were, as the Apologist said, "the soul of the world."

They were this largely because they followed after truth. To-day no less than then truthfulness is the condition of healthy Church life. Of late we have seen on a gigantic scale the exceeding evil of disregarding the sacredness of words. In the Church we must with unsleeping vigilance watch against the first inroads of this contamination. In this "claim" to interpret symbolically the historical clauses of the Creed I can only see (however unintentional we may desire to think it) the application to the confession of our Christian faith of the claim made in a line famous in Greek literature¹:

ἡ γλῶσσ' ὁμώμοχ', ἡ δὲ φρήν ἀνώμοτος.

"My tongue hath sworn, but my mind is unsworn."

In the deliberate dissociation of the words of the mouth from the intention of the mind, history, I believe, shews that there lies a danger to our Christianity and our civilisation than which none is greater. In these days, disciplined by the long and bitter trial of the war, we are learning in a new way to long after reality in our religion. It would be clean contrary to the best spirit of the

¹ Euripides, *Hippolytus* 612. See Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 275, *Ran.* 1471; Aristotle, *Rhet.* iii. 15. 8. The scene in the *Ranae*, one of the great scenes of Athenian drama, is well worth reading. It has a serious meaning. You cannot stay at your pleasure the application of the principle expressed in this line, if once it be granted.

time to admit the "claim" that men may assent to a Creed which is quite different from their belief.

If the solvent force of such a licence of interpretation as is implied in the "claim" we are considering is allowed to work, the meaning which is to be attached to the Apostles' Creed becomes a matter relative to the individual and to the individual alone. There is no longer a standard of belief to which appeal can be made; for all is now subjective. In this position I find that I have strong support in a quarter from which I did not expect it. Printing one sentence in italics, I quote a passage from an article by Professor Kirsopp Lake in the *Hibbert Journal* for July 1918 (pp. 633 f.) :—

"We [a certain type of Liberal] would say that the 'figurative' method is popular and legitimate, but, none the less, a mistake. *By it anything can be made to mean anything.* The true position is that we do *not* accept the Creed *ex animo*, because it represents not our mind but that of a generation which, however great it may have been, was nevertheless mistaken in its view of the interpretation and authority of the Scriptures on which the Creed is based. As a matter of Church discipline and custom we recite the Creed in our liturgical

services, but we desire either to see it dropped or preserved merely as a monument of the history of the Church. It is in this last sense that we accept it."

I am constrained to say that any one who maintains that a "method" is "legitimate" whereby "anything can be made to mean anything" is strangely deficient in many important qualities, but pre-eminently so in a sense of the ludicrous. But, however extraordinary its context, Professor Kirsopp Lake's rough verdict on the method of "symbolical interpretation" is, I believe, absolutely true. The Professor's own position, he tells us, is this. He accepts "the Creed" as "a monument of the history of the Church"; and he recites it in "liturgical services" as "a matter of Church discipline and order." To state this position is sufficient. It too, of its kind, is "a monument of the history of the Church."

But what would the admission of the "claim" "symbolically" to interpret the Apostles' Creed lay up for the future? To-day those who make this claim "assert without reserve [their] belief in the Incarnation and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ."¹ Presently there will arise another

¹ Petition of the Council of the Churchmen's Union in 1914; see *Chronicle of Convocation*, 1914, No. 2, p. 415.

group of men who in turn will make their "claim." It will be something after this manner :—

"The Apostles' Creed is based on an appeal to Scripture. Instead of looking at isolated passages of Scripture we have looked at the New Testament as a whole, and have cross-examined its combined evidence. As a result of our perfectly honest study we have come to certain conclusions. The general verdict of Scripture is against the historicity of any such miracle¹ as is involved in the Incarnation, as that word is commonly understood. We claim to use the word, however, putting on it a symbolical interpretation of our own, just as others claim to use the word Resurrection. For we believe that God dwells in men, who are flesh, and that in richer measure He dwells in those who are holy ; and of these Jesus Christ is one of the greatest. We claim, therefore, to assent to and to recite the Creed of the Church of our Fathers, putting, as we have a right to do, our own

¹ Compare Emmet, *Conscience, Creed, and Critics*, p. 96 : "The argument of those who reject the Virgin Birth, be they right or wrong, really rests, as we have seen, on this very appeal to Scripture. They argue that if, instead of looking at isolated passages, we look at the New Testament as a whole and cross-examine the combined evidence, the verdict is against the historicity of this particular miracle."

meaning upon its words. We are ready to say: 'I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord.' By 'His only Son' we mean that Jesus was the national hero whom the Jews expected. One of the titles which belonged to this national hero was 'Son of God.' To us, therefore, the words 'Son of God' historically pertain to Jesus as the Messiah. By 'our Lord' we mean that Jesus was a teacher of rare wisdom; and we revere His words and shape our lives by many of them. The difference between the words of the Apostles' Creed and the belief which we have reached by a candid study of the New Testament is far less than the difference between the words of the Apostles' Creed and the belief of those who deny that Jesus was born of a Virgin, whereas the Creed definitely states that He was. The Churchmen just mentioned cannot assert their claim and refuse ours. If they do, it will be only too clear that they place the limit just about where their own criticism has led them.¹ And if the Bishops, as responsible officers of the

¹ Compare Emmet, *op. cit.* p. 57: "One is sometimes inclined to think that the real dividing line comes between those who place the limit just about where their own criticism has led them, and those who are prepared to sympathise with and admit the rights of others who have gone further than themselves."

Church, by their corporate action raise any difficulty in regard to our 'claim,' we must at once remind them that our Church does not regard even Bishops in council as infallible. The 21st article says with respect to General Councils that 'they may err, and have erred, even in matters pertaining to God.'¹ Further, we must tell them that no man who can use the authorised services with an honest conscience in the sight of God (as we assume that those other Churchmen use the Order for the Burial of the Dead in the Prayer Book, though, indeed, their doctrine of the Resurrection seems to differ widely from the language of its prayers and from its 'sure and certain hope'), and who can sincerely accept and preach the revelation of God through Christ, ought to be lightly debarred from the exercise of his ministry in a Church that is truly Catholic. Anything beyond this is doctrinal Puritanism.² So, though those who already

¹ Compare Canon Glazebrook's letter (see above, p. 8).

² Compare Emmet, *op. cit.* p. 106: "No man who can use them [her authorised services] with an honest conscience in the sight of God and can sincerely accept and preach the revelation of God through Christ will be lightly debarred from the exercise of his ministry in a Church that is truly Catholic. Anything beyond this is doctrinal Puritanism."

I have ventured thus to use these passages from Mr. Emmet's book because I am sure that, while he sincerely desires to do justice to the convictions of those from whom

claim symbolically to interpret the Creed may suspect us, we use them as stepping-stones, as others in turn will use us. And thus at last we shall reach the Faith of a truly Modern Churchman."

For myself I believe that to such a claim, made under the conditions supposed, there would be no just or reasonable answer. Once surrender the position that the Apostles' Creed, a public formulary which all men know, is in a real sense a standard of doctrine, and the only possible standard is an infinitely varying standard locked up in the minds of the several Bishops and Officers of the Church. The attempt to apply that infinitely varying standard would mean first tyranny and then rebellion. The absence of any standard would quickly end in chaos.

Two further consequences of the acceptance of this "claim" must be carefully noted.

Its acceptance would destroy in the Church of England that great element of doctrinal continuity with an immemorial past for which the Apostles' Creed stands. For manifestly that continuity depends not on the recital in liturgical services of the bare words of the Creed but on

he differs, he has written without realising the true scope of his words. They carry him far beyond the limit which he wishes to lay down.

the Church's acknowledgment of their recognised meaning. When we disown and discredit its affirmations, a Creed ceases to bind us to those who in past generations found in those same affirmations the confession of a living faith.

Again, the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are the two confessions of faith by which the Church of England takes its place in Christendom. Are there negotiations between ourselves and the great historical Churches of Christendom? Are there overtures and movements which aim at a closer union between ourselves and our Christian brethren who at home are separated from us? Does the Church of England cherish the hope of becoming a mediator between different Christian communities in East and West? In all these cases—and they are not unsubstantial dreams—the Church of England points to the Apostles' Creed as one of the two chief witnesses to its faith; and by that faith it is judged. But this witness becomes a fraudulent witness, unless the Creed represents (so far as any common formula can) the belief of its members. If the authorities of the Church of England were to recognise as valid the “claim” “symbolically” to interpret the clauses of the Apostles' Creed as to the Virgin Birth and as to the Resurrection of our Lord on the third day, they would render

false and delusive the credentials which the Church of England offers to Christendom. And the pledge which a true Church gives must be true.

In a final paragraph I desire with my whole soul to appeal to the conscience of those whom my words may reach. Such an appeal, I am persuaded, is the right way of dealing with the present crisis. I am sure that many who from different motives are inclined to make or to support the "claim" as to the Apostles' Creed of which I have been speaking contemplate the position with disquiet and distress of mind. Towards those, indeed, who in days of acknowledged difficulty are passing through a season of self-questioning or perplexity as to matters of faith, it is permissible for us all, nay, it is binding upon us all, to feel that patience and that sympathy which we believe are according to the will and the example of our common Master. But in regard to the definite "claim" itself I solemnly ask my brethren in Christ, both from the personal and from the corporate point of view, unflinchingly to face the grave question of its morality. As to the answer which must be given I myself have no doubt. If we would be fellow-workers with the Truth, the confession of our mouth must be the same as the belief of our heart.

ADDITIONAL NOTE I

THE ASCENSION

WHEN Canon Glazebrook sent me his letter which afterwards appeared in the *Times*, he enclosed a copy of *The Modern Churchman* for May 1918, with the following words: "I venture to send you a copy of *The Modern Churchman* for this month, which contains a sermon of mine on the Ascension. That will probably make up the gaps in my letter to you." It was clearly, therefore, my duty to notice this sermon. But I felt that it would be better to do so in a separate note rather than to interrupt my examination of *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*. I now print in full the pertinent portion of the sermon.

"The moment we try, as I have been doing, to express our faith about these matters in plain words, paradox and antinomy warn us that language will not stand the strain. What better proof do we require that our wiser course is to rest content with symbols, especially with those to which time has given an elastic connotation? For my own part, I am glad to do so. But for

that reason I am jealous of a modern attempt which has been made to give the connotation a new rigidity. It is the outcome of a laudable desire to reconcile St. Luke's narrative of the Ascension with the modern conception of the universe. So far as I know, the theory originated with a teacher whose name is justly venerated in Cambridge, and to whose writings I am myself a grateful debtor. But *amicus Plato, magis amica veritas*. Submission to Bishop Westcott's mere authority would be an ill tribute to his memory. With all respect, therefore, I venture to give reasons for dissent from his opinion.

"It is common ground that, since the earth is a flying ball in illimitable space, where nothing even faintly corresponds to the fabled vault of heaven, the proposition that Jesus 'ascended into heaven' has in the literal sense no meaning at all. What explanation, then, can be given to St. Luke's narrative? To many of us, if not most, the natural conclusion seems the right one. The story is peculiar to St. Luke, and he tells it in two versions which do not agree. Like his account of the fiery tongues at Pentecost, it bears the mark of its origin in popular imagination. We might even venture to say that, given the ancient conception of the world, some such story must have arisen out of popular attempts to answer the question, 'How did the Lord pass from the sight of men?' The story, as we have it, would thus be a natural growth from the soil of Jerusalem.

And just because it was so natural, so congruous to the spirit of the age, it was accepted almost without question by St. Luke, and through his influence by the Church at large.

“Not altogether without protest. The fourth Evangelist, if I mistake not, has indicated his disapproval of the popular realism of St. Luke’s narrative. He never contradicts his predecessors ; but he often gently corrects what he considers their mistakes, here by a pointed omission, there by a variety of detail, there by the turn of a phrase. In my text ¹ we may recognise a fine example of his delicate art. For he tells how the risen Lord, appearing to Mary Magdalene, gives her a message for the disciples : ‘ Say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.’ Such a message would be wholly superfluous, if He intended to assemble the apostles to witness a formal and visible ascension. Can we doubt that the evangelist, who so constantly warns his readers not to put the material in the place of the spiritual, reported that message for the purpose of discrediting the story which had so recently become popular ? But his gentle protest failed of effect at the time, and in our day has failed even to attract attention.

“Bishop Westcott and his followers, on the other hand, unwilling to admit such an error on

¹ “Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God ” (John xx. 17).

the part of St. Luke, have adopted a theory which is intended to reconcile his narrative with the facts established by modern science. It may be stated in a few words. Wishing to teach His disciples the truth that He was returning to the Father, Jesus adopted the only method by which it was possible to convey the right idea to their untrained minds. After the example of the ancient prophets, He put the lesson into the form of an acted parable. He assembled the disciples upon Olivet, and before their eyes rose visibly from the ground for a space, so as to give the impression that He was literally ascending to the vault of heaven ; and then covered Himself with a cloud, which veiled whatever transformation may have followed.

“ Surely it is a grave abuse of language to describe this action as a parable ! A parable consists of two parts : an action, real or imagined, but always of the normal kind, such as might be seen in common life, and a discourse explaining the truth which it illustrates. Now, in the case we are considering, neither of these elements is present ; for the action is essentially abnormal, and no explanation could be given in words without destroying the impression which the miracle was designed to produce. The point of the whole scene, on this theory, lies in the fact that it was not explained. Clearly, on this supposition, the right name for the scene is not parable but drama. Drama serves many high

purposes, and teaches many noble lessons to an audience, who, though carried away by its magic, are not deceived. But what of the drama, enacted without a stage, by which the spectators are deceived? Upon such drama judgment has been pronounced in some familiar words: 'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees—actors that you are—ὑπόκριται [*sic*].' To whom were these words addressed? To some highly respectable religious leaders who—for the edification of others, as they would claim—made a show of their charities, posed in their prayers, and dramatised their fasting. And this judgment was no exception, but the rule. If we may trust the records, there is no fault which Jesus more emphatically condemned than the posing which makes religion histrionic. And yet we are invited to believe that He, whose transparent simplicity of word and action entirely conformed to the standard by which He measured others, spent His last moments upon earth as the chief actor in an edifying dramatic representation!"

In these paragraphs there are four points to which I must turn.

(i.) "The story is peculiar to St. Luke, and he tells it in two versions which do not agree." So the Canon writes. Now the allusions to *an* Ascension of our Lord found in the other books of the New Testament, in my judgment, imply a knowledge of such a history as we actually find in St. Luke's Gospel and in the Acts. Let me say in passing that it is a pleasure

to notice that the Canon agrees with me in holding that the closing verses of the Gospel contain the story of the Ascension. The allusions to *an* Ascension referred to above require a justification. They receive a justification from what is told us by St. Luke. There is doubtless more cogent evidence that there was a definite event recognised as an Ascension than there is for the particular story of the Ascension which comes to us on the authority, tested as it is in many ways and approved, of the one historian. Against this story the Canon objects that St. Luke tells it in two versions which do not agree. The only plausible reason, so far as I know, for saying that the two versions do not agree lies in the fact that in the Gospel the story of the Ascension is continuous with the story of the day of the Resurrection, so that it has been argued that, when he wrote the Gospel, St. Luke thought that the Ascension actually took place on the first Easter day, whereas the Acts tells us that forty days elapsed between the Resurrection and the Ascension. It is obvious that on the last page of the Gospel St. Luke is giving a rapid summary of events. It is very possible that the space on his roll was used up. Further, in the earlier portion of the Gospel he records sayings of Christ without in any way defining their relation to the preceding context (see *e.g.* xii. 54, xiii. 6, xvi. 1). We are, therefore, fully justified in thinking that the words "And he said unto them" (xxiv. 44) introduce an epitome of the Lord's sayings spoken at a later time than the evening of the day on which He rose. And it is reasonable to think that

it never occurred to St. Luke to imagine that his compressed record was open to the interpretation which some modern critics put upon it, because he was fully conscious that the knowledge of the forty days (which he mentions in another part of the same historical work) was a possession common to himself and to his readers.

(ii.) "The fourth Evangelist, if I mistake not, has indicated his disapproval of the popular realism of St. Luke's narrative." The Canon urges that the Lord's message sent by Mary Magdalene to the disciples, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God," "would be wholly superfluous, if He intended to assemble the apostles to witness a formal and visible ascension." I confess that I am completely at a loss to understand why this message should be "wholly superfluous" if the disciples were presently to see Him ascend. Why should we not think that our Lord prepared His disciples for His Ascension, as He had prepared them for His Resurrection as well as for His death? Moreover, by such a message He enabled them the better to understand the meaning of His appearances and the character of those days which lay immediately before them. But let us here also follow the golden rule of looking at the context and of enquiring whether the Evangelist has elsewhere alluded to the matter in question.

The context is this: "Touch me not; for I have not yet ascended (*οὐπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα*) unto the Father; but go unto my brethren, and say to them,

I ascend, etc.” Clearly if we would understand the words “I ascend,” we must take into account the words which immediately precede, “I have not yet ascended.” And further, the fourth Evangelist could not conceivably have represented our Lord as saying these last words, unless he himself believed that there was such a real event as the Ascension, and that it was separate from and subsequent to the Resurrection.

But has the fourth Evangelist elsewhere referred to the Ascension? It will be remembered that at Capernaum Jesus spoke of Himself as “the bread which came down out of heaven” (John vi. 58). Many of His disciples felt this to be a hard saying and murmured at it. Jesus then said to them, “Doth this cause you to stumble? What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before?” Here too it is impossible to suppose that the fourth Evangelist would have put on record in this form words which he ascribes to the Lord, if he himself had not believed in a “visible ascension” which the disciples “witnessed.” Further, Canon Glazebrook rightly, as I think, holds that the fourth Evangelist “was well acquainted with all the Synoptic Gospels.”¹ It is almost impossible to suppose that he was not also “well acquainted with” the Acts, seeing that the third Gospel and the Acts are simply two parts of a single historical work. Now, to the words of John vi. 62, “What if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before” (εἰὰν οἶν

¹ *The Faith of a Modern Churchman*, p. 70.

θεωρῆτε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀναβαίνοντα ὅπου ἦν τὸ πρότερον), we have a remarkable parallel in the story of the Ascension in Acts i. 11, "in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven" (ὅν τρόπον ἐθεώσασθε αὐτὸν πορευόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν). In both passages we have a strong verb expressing sight—in the Gospel θεωρεῖν (a favourite word in that Gospel especially in relation to the "signs" and "works" of Jesus), and in the Acts θεᾶσθαι. Again, in both passages we have following the verb a present participle, giving for a moment the picture of the departing Saviour—in the Gospel ἀναβαίνοντα,¹ and in the Acts πορευόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν. It is at least worth considering whether we are not justified in thinking the words of the fourth Evangelist a conscious reminiscence of the phrase in the Lucan history of the Ascension. But however this may be, I submit that, when without prejudice we consider the whole context in John xx. 17, and the allusion to the Ascension in John vi. 62, we must infer that the fourth Evangelist accepted and believed the Lucan story which he knew.

(iii.) "Surely it is a grave abuse of language to describe this action as a parable." Canon Glazebrook is here referring, I presume, to some words of Bishop Westcott²: "The physical elevation was a speaking parable, an eloquent symbol, but not the Truth to which it pointed or the reality which it foreshadowed."

¹ For θεωρεῖν followed by a present participle see also John vi. 19, x. 12, xx. 6, 12, 14.

² *Revelation of the Risen Lord*, p. 180.

I have used similar words.¹ Neither in the Hebrew nor in the English Bible is the word *parable* (Heb. *Mashal*) used of the symbolical acts of the Prophets. With this preface I turn to the Canon's definition of a parable: "A parable consists of two parts: an action, real or imagined, but always of the normal kind, such as might be seen in common life, and a discourse explaining the truth which it illustrates." Let us look at this definition. (a) It is true that a parable is commonly a story of ordinary life. But I doubt much if this limitation is of the essence of a parable. The story of Dives and Lazarus is always accounted one of our Lord's parables; and that story, beginning with ordinary life, passes into the unseen world. (b) I confess that before I read the Canon's words I had never heard that you cannot have a parable without "a discourse explaining the truth which [the parable] illustrates." Probably most persons will agree with me that some of the greatest parables ever spoken would, even from a merely literary point of view, be spoiled by the appendage of such an explanatory "discourse." Does any one wish that such a "discourse" had been added to the parable of the Prodigal Son? As a matter of fact this definition excludes from the category of parables all our Lord's parables except the parable of the Sower and the parable of the Tares. And it will be observed that these stories are in the Gospels called parables before an explanation of them is given (Mark iv. 10, 13; Matt. xiii. 24, 36).

¹ The passage is quoted fully above, p. 54.

For myself I find it impossible to doubt that this unusual definition of a parable was formulated in view of its proposed application. If the definition cannot be upheld, the application fails. It is instructive to compare with the Canon's definition that given in Murray's *New English Dictionary*: "A fictitious narrative or allegory (usually something that might naturally occur), by which moral or spiritual relations are typically figured or set forth, as the parables of the N.T. (Now the usual sense)." But in truth it is superfluous for me to point out that the use of the word *parable* in this connexion, which the Canon dignifies by the impeachment that it is "a grave abuse of language," is a mere accident of expression, which involves no principle of any kind. If it is a stumbling-block to any one, I at least will hereafter for ever avoid its use in reference to this subject. The idea which the word "parable" was intended to convey is that the Ascension was on our Lord's part an action of revelation, a symbolical or sacramental action, an outward and visible sign of a spiritual truth.

(iv.) It is now my duty to deal with the closing portion of the passage which I have quoted above. I cannot but feel great regret for the Canon's own sake that he has allowed himself to write as he does here write. I am, however, concerned with the passage as an argument. As such, I must make a few observations about it. (a) I call attention to the Canon's application of the word *hypocrite*. It is perfectly true that in earlier Greek the word *υποκριτής*

among other meanings had the meaning of *actor*, and that out of this has grown the meaning which the word bears in the New Testament. But the real question for us is : What is the meaning of the word "hypocrite" in the New Testament? There the word has always a special moral connotation. The hypocrite is one who is ostentatious in his religion, in order that he may make his neighbours admire him as a man more holy than his fellows. Whether he himself would claim that the show he makes is "for the edification of others" does not in any sense come within the purview of the word. Two things are necessary to qualify a man for the title of hypocrite : (1) outwardly, ostentation in religion ; (2) inwardly, the motive of self-glorification. "When thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men." But it can hardly be doubted that our Lord habitually spoke in Aramaic. The Aramaic word which He probably used in such sayings as the one we are considering has a history altogether different from that of the Greek word "hypocrite" and has nothing to do with the drama. I venture to add that the same must be said of any Aramaic word which the Lord could have used in this connexion.¹ From the standpoint of scholarship, therefore, I cannot but say that the Lord's words,

¹ On the Aramaic equivalent of the Greek word "hypocrite" see Swete on Mark vii. 6, McNeile on Matt. vi. 2. The Syriac versions commonly translate the Greek word by two words meaning "respector of persons." The Jerusalem Syriac has "liar."

“ Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,” have not the remotest connexion with the story of the Ascension, even if we take the view of that story which the Canon takes. (b) I now turn to those most painful closing words : “ And yet we are invited to believe that He, etc.” I confess that I do not find it easy to write of them with unmoved calmness. Let me, however, express myself in regard to them thus. When I think of what the Lord did and of what the Lord said at the Institution of the Lord’s Supper, on the same night in which He was betrayed, I could write a paragraph describing that scene, using exactly the Canon’s thoughts and the Canon’s words. But God forbid that I should do so. The real fact is that we must remind ourselves that revelation is in its very nature a condescension to men. This is true whether we look at words of revelation or at acts of revelation. As to words of revelation : when our Lord bade His disciples to pray after this manner, “ Our Father which art in heaven,¹” He spoke the language about God which as men they understood. Yet any one may say, if he wishes to say it, that in this our Lord was deceiving them. As to acts of

¹ It cannot be urged that “ which art in heaven ” is due to the first Evangelist. For St. Mark has the phrase, “ Your Father which is in heaven ” in xi. 25 (the only place where he uses it) ; and this verse contains a clear allusion to a clause of the Lord’s Prayer, the word *παράπτωμα* occurring in the Gospels only here and in Matt. vi. 14 f. (the Lord’s Prayer). It is important to compare Mark vi. 41 (|| Matt., Luke), vii. 34 ; John xi. 41, xvii. 1. These passages indicate that “ looking up to heaven ” was an attitude of our Lord in prayer long remembered.

revelation : among all revelations given to men the Incarnation itself is that one in which the divine condescension is the most conspicuous and the most essentially involved. The Incarnation is a revelation of eternal, spiritual, divine truth wrought out in a life lived under the conditions of the changing and delusive world of phenomena. Under these conditions the Lord Jesus Christ manifested to men God and the things of God. And to me at least it seems (if I may use such words in such a context) natural and inevitable that the last act of the long series of acts in the life of the incarnate Lord should be strictly of the same nature as the whole revelation—an outward and visible sign to men of a spiritual and divine truth.

ADDITIONAL NOTE II

THE READING IN JOHN I. 13 AND THE MEANING OF THE WORD "ONLY-BEGOTTEN"

THE interest of the "Western" reading in John i. 13 is so great that I owe my readers a somewhat fuller statement of the facts than it was possible for me to give above. It will be remembered that verses 12, 13 run thus :—

"But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name : which were born [*or* begotten], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man [*rather* of a man *or* of a husband], but of God."

I subjoin the Greek of *v.* 13 and the Latin Vulgate :

οἱ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς
οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς ἀλλ' ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.

"Qui non ex sanguinibus neque ex voluntate carnis neque ex voluntate viri sed ex deo nati sunt."

The reading with the singular, *i.e.* "who was begotten," is not found, so far as is known, in any Greek

MS.¹ It is found, however, in the Old Latin Codex Veronensis (=b) and in the *Liber Comicus* (*Liber Comicus sive Lectionarius Missae quo Toletana ecclesia ante annos mille et ducentos utebatur*, ed. D. G. Morin; *Anecdota Maredsolana I.*; Maredsolii, 1893). These two authorities read: "Qui . . . natus est."²

It seems certain that Irenaeus (who wrote his five books *Against Heresies* about A.D. 190 in Greek, though a large part of the work has come down to us in an ancient Latin translation) had the "singular" reading in his text of St. John. For, referring to certain heretics who taught that *Jesus* was born of Mary but that *Christ* came down from above, Irenaeus writes (ed. Mass. iii. xvi. 2): "Matthew might have said 'The generation of Jesus was on this wise'; but the Holy Spirit, foreseeing that there would be false teachers, and arming us beforehand against their deceits, saith through Matthew, 'The generation of Christ was on this wise'; and (He said) that this is Emmanuel, lest haply we should suppose that He was a mere man; (*for not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of a man but of the will of God was the Word*

¹ Codex Bezae (=D) omits the relative *al*, as does also the Old Latin Codex Vercellensis (=a). The Curetonian Syriac has "those who" with the verb in the singular; but as the vowel which differentiates the singular and plural verb was not sounded in Syriac, and as the next word begins with this vowel, this reading is not so significant as it might seem at first sight.

² In the *Liber Comicus* the verse is given thus: "Qui non ex sanguinibus neque ex volumpate viri sed ex deo natus est." The variant "voluptate" occurs also in a few Lat. Vulg. MSS. (see Wordsworth, *Novum Test. Latine*, in loco) and in one MS. of the Latin Version of Irenaeus (iii. xvi. 2, xxi. 5).

made flesh), and that we might not imagine that Jesus was one person, Christ another, but that we might know that Jesus and Christ are one and the same person." The Greek is not extant here. The Latin version of the important words which I have printed in italics is as follows: "Non enim ex voluntate carnis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex voluntate Dei, Verbum caro factus est." Later on (iii. xix. 2) Irenaeus says: "That man knows Him to whom the Father in Heaven revealed Him, to the intent that he might understand that *He who was born Son of Man not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of a man* is the Christ, the Son of the living God." The Latin version is "quoniam is qui non ex voluntate carnis neque ex voluntate viri natus est Filius Hominis." So iii. xxi. 5 ("quoniam *non ex voluntate viri erat qui nascebatur*") and iii. xxi. 7 ("uti non *ex voluntate viri sed ex voluntate Dei* adventum ejus qui secundum hominem est intelligamus").

Tertullian of Carthage, who wrote a little later than Irenaeus, lays stress on the "singular" reading several times in his treatise *De Carne Christi*. The chief passage is in chapter xix.: "What then does this mean, 'Not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of a man but of God *was He born*'? This passage I shall use the better when I have refuted its corrupters. For the latter maintain that it is written on this wise, 'Not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of a man but of God *were they born*,' as though the passage pointed to the persons just mentioned, those who believe on His name, in

order that it may shew that the seed is a hidden seed, belonging to the elect and spiritual men, which position they appropriate to themselves. But how can this be, when all who believe in the Name of the Lord, even Valentinus himself [the arch-heretic], according to the common law of the human race are born of blood and of the will of the flesh and of the will of a man? So in the singular is it written, as of the Lord (alone) 'And of God was He born.' " Here Tertullian is dealing with the Valentinian heretics. Elsewhere he applies the words as against another heretic. A certain Ebion, he tells us (ch. xiv.), held that " Jesus was simply a man, of the seed of David, not Son of God." In a later passage (ch. xxiv.), therefore, Tertullian says: " To Ebion He [God in Scripture] makes answer, ' Not of blood nor of the will of the flesh and of a man but of God was He born.' " Compare also chapters xv., xvi.

Other later Latin writers (e.g. Ambrose, Augustine, Sulpicius Severus) quote, or allude to, the verse with the " singular " reading: " Qui . . . natus est." After Irenaeus no Greek writer seems to quote the verse in this form, though perhaps Hippolytus and Methodius had a knowledge of it. The authorities are given in Sabatier, *Bibliorum Sacrorum Latinae Versiones Antiquae* (iii. p. 388); in Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Johannes, Exkurs ii.* (pp. 700 ff.); and in Box, *The Virgin Birth of Jesus*, pp. 228 ff.

Zahn in the *Excursus* above referred to and in the *Commentary* itself, pp. 72 ff., as also in his *Introduction to the N.T.*, E.T., ii. pp. 266, 288, 310, discusses

at length the questions connected with the reading and the interpretation of the passage. Zahn thinks that in the original text (1) a new sentence began with the words οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων (there being no relative), and (2) that the verb was in the singular, so that the whole passage ran thus: "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his Name. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God was he born [*or* begotten]. And the Word became flesh." He also supposes: (i.) that Tertullian was right in his accusation, and that the Valentinians were guilty of changing the singular verb into a plural (ἐγεννήθησαν), thus enabling themselves to apply the words to those who, according to their system, were designated "the spiritual ones"; (ii.) that the relative was a later addition. Zahn supports his view as to the original text by an appeal to internal evidence, *e.g.*, he urges that, *if* the sentence had run as it does in the familiar text, οἵτινες (not οἱ) would have been necessary as the connecting relative.

As I said above, p. 69, I am quite unable to accept the singular verb (ἐγεννήθη) as the original text. The importance and the great interest of this reading in my view lie in the fact that the reading itself and the comments of early writers upon it demonstrate how inevitably, when freshly read, the words "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of a man but of God were they begotten" directed men's thoughts to the Virgin Birth, and how accu-

rately the phrases were felt to express the truth as to the Virgin Birth.

I claim Justin Martyr as the first witness to the view which I myself take of the passage, viz., that the true reading is the common one ("who *were* born"), but that by the language used the mind of the reader is necessarily turned to the Virgin Birth. Justin is adduced by Zahn as a witness to the "singular" reading, but I venture to think that Zahn reaches this conclusion by neglecting the context of one of the passages on which he relies. The passage is in the First Apology, 32. Justin is there commenting *more suo* on Gen. xlix. 11. His words are as follows: "The words 'Washing his garment in the blood of the grape' were prophetic of the passion which the [Lord] should suffer, cleansing by His blood those who believe in Him. For that which the divine Spirit by the prophet calls His garment is *the men who believe in Him, in whom there dwelleth the seed which is from God*, even the Word. But that which is called the blood of the grape signified that He who should appear should be possessed of blood, yet not from human seed but from divine power." The words which I have italicised seem to me quite clearly to shew that Justin had before him and used the ordinary reading. At the same time Justin is reminded by the reading familiar to us of the Lord's Virgin Birth. The two other passages to which Zahn refers (*Dial. with Trypho*, 54, 63), if taken apart from the passage just discussed, might seem to indicate that Justin had the "singular" reading before him.

Lastly, I now touch on the meaning of the word "only-begotten" (*μονογενής*) in John i. 14, 18. Zahn (*Das Evangelium des Johannes*, p. 82) holds that, if v. 13 is properly read and interpreted, it cannot be doubted that the word *μονογενής* ("only-begotten") refers to the Incarnation and not to the eternal relation between the Father and the Son. Even apart from the "singular reading" in v. 13 this view of *μονογενής* was urged some years ago by a good English scholar, the late Mr. Arthur Carr, in the *Expository Times* for August 1907, pp. 521 ff. It appears to me that, when three of the passages are considered in which *μονογενής* occurs in St. John's Gospel (i. 14, 18, iii. 16), it is seen that necessarily the word refers to that relation of the Father and the Son which existed eternally, apart from and before the Incarnation of the Lord in time. Note specially 1 John iv. 9 and also John xvii. 5, 1 John v. 18. I venture to think that the words of John xvii. 5 ("And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was") are an illuminating comment on John i. 14 ("glory as of the only-begotten from the Father"), and shew that the reference in the latter passage is to the Sonship which was before time.

INDEX

- Aristides, 45
Aristophanes, *Ranae*, 175 *n.*
Articles, the Thirty-nine, 42, 47
Ascension, the, 9 f., 46 ff., 185 ff.
Augustine, St., 43, 50

Bethune-Baker, Dr., 171 *n.*
Body (as synonym of flesh), 38
Box, Canon G. H., 64 *n.*, 202
Burial of our Lord, 135 ff.

Canterbury, the Archbishop of, 11 f., 29 f., 165 f.
Carr, the late Rev. A., 205
Celsus, 40 f.
Charles, Canon, 95 *n.*, 141 ff.
Chrysostom, St., 141
Colossians, Epistle to the (ii. 12), 122, 137
"Constantinopolitan" Creed, 6, 51 f., 182
Continuity of doctrine, 181 f.
Convocation of Canterbury, 6, 11, 15 ff., 25 ff.
Corinthians, First Epistle to the—(vi. 13 ff.), 149; (xv.), 39, 90, 97 ff., 106 f., 108 f., 118 ff., 120 *n.*, 133 ff.
Corinthians, Second Epistle to the—(i. 17 ff.), 109 ff.; (v. 1-9), 90, 102-120, 149
Cyril of Alexandria, 50, 52 *n.*

David, the Son of, 60 f., 62
Descent into Hell, 46 ff.

Emmet, Rev. C. W., 178 ff. *notes*
Euripides, 175
Eusebius, 146 f.
Ezra, Fourth Book of (v. 48), 143 *n.*
ἐπενδύσασθαι, 103 f.

"First-fruits," 99 ff.
Flesh (as synonym of body), 38

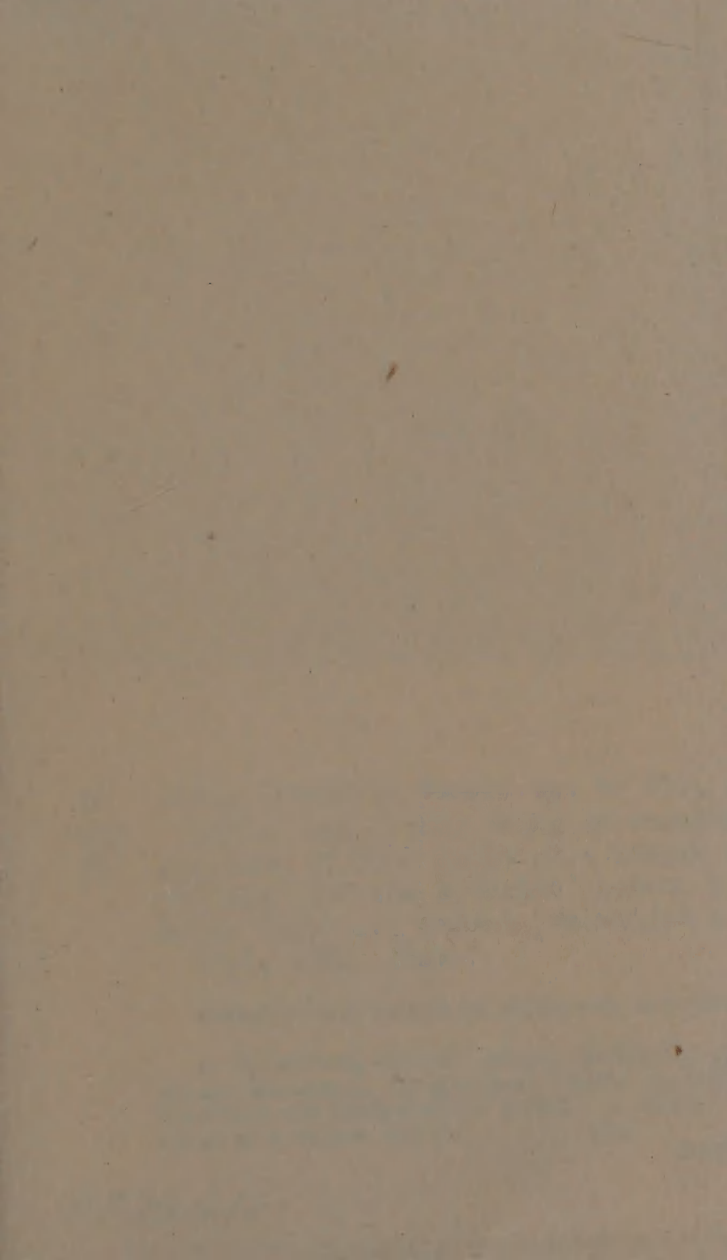
Galatians, Epistle to the (ii. 1, 9), 107
Genealogies of our Lord, 59 ff.
Gloucester, the Bishop of, 166 *n.*
Gnostics, 153 f.
γυμνός, 114 *n.*

Harnack, Professor, 64
Historical evidence, nature of, 77 f.
Holy Spirit, the office of the, in the Resurrection, 117 f., 148 ff.

Incorporeal nature of God, 41 ff.
Irenaeus, 154 *n.*, 200 f.
Irony in Gospel according to St. John, 72 ff.

John of Damascus, 43
John, St., Gospel according to—(i. 11 ff.), 68 ff., 199 ff.; (i. 14), 70; (i. 45 ff.), 71 ff.; (iii. 13), 49 ff.; (vi. 41 ff.), 71 ff.; (vi. 62), 192 f.
Josephus, 60
Justin Martyr, 154 *n.*, 204

- Lake, Professor Kirsopp, 177
 Lambeth Conference, 6, 8, 18 ff.
 Leo the Great, 50
 Lobstein, Professor, 57
 Luke, St., Gospel according to—story of the Lord's birth and childhood, 56 ff.; genealogy, 59 ff.; Resurrection, 85; Ascension, 189 ff.
 McNeile, Dr., 196 n.
 Mark, St., Gospel according to—(vi. 3), 64; (xi. 25), 197 n.; (xiv. 58), 104 n.; (xvi. 9-20), 82 ff.
 Matter not contemptible, 153 f.
 Matthew, St., Gospel according to—genealogy, 59 ff.; story of the Lord's birth and childhood, 56 ff.
 Moschus, 143
μονογενής, 205
 Nicaea, Creed of, 51
 Origen, 40 f.
 Oxford, Bishop of, 9 f.
 Parable, definition of, 188 f., 193 ff.
 Paul, St., silence of, as to the Lord's life, 64 f.; teaching of, as to the Resurrection, 38 ff., 83 f., 87, 89-152
 Pearson, Bishop, 42
 Philippians, Epistle to the—(i. 23), 90 f., 126; (iii. 10 f.), 127 f.; (iii. 20 f.), 39 f., 128 f., 150 f.
Quicumque Vult, the, 167 ff.
 Resurrection, the, 38 ff., 81-155, 171 ff., 180
 Romans, Epistle to the—(i. 1 ff.), 62 ff.; (vi. 3), 121 f.; (viii. 11), 122 ff., 149 f.; (viii. 19 ff.), 124 ff.
 Rufinus, 52 f.
 Seed, the analogy of the, 98 f., 119, 142 ff.
 Sheol, 91, 94 f.
 Sidgwick, Prof. Henry, 47 f.
 Socrates (the historian), 43 f.
 Sophocles, 73
 Swete, Dr., 150, 196 n.
 "Symbolical Interpretation," 169 ff.
σκήνος, 104 n.
 Tatian, 44 f.
 Tennyson, 48
 Tertullian, 201 f.
 Theophilus of Alexandria, 44
 Thessalonians, First Epistle to—(i. 9 f.), 132 f.; (iv. 13 f.), 89 f., 92 ff., 98 n.; (v. 23), 96 n.
 Third day, on the, 88 f., 135 and *note*
 Thomas Aquinas, 42 f., 50
 Usener, Professor, 57 ff.
 Vienne and Lyons, Letter of Churches of, 146 ff.
 Virgin Birth, the, 55-80, 170 f.
 Westcott, Bishop, 9, 138 f., 186 ff.
 Whitsunday, Proper Preface for, 167 n.
 Williams, Dr. Lukyn, 61 n.
 Zahn, Professor, 69, 202 f., 205



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